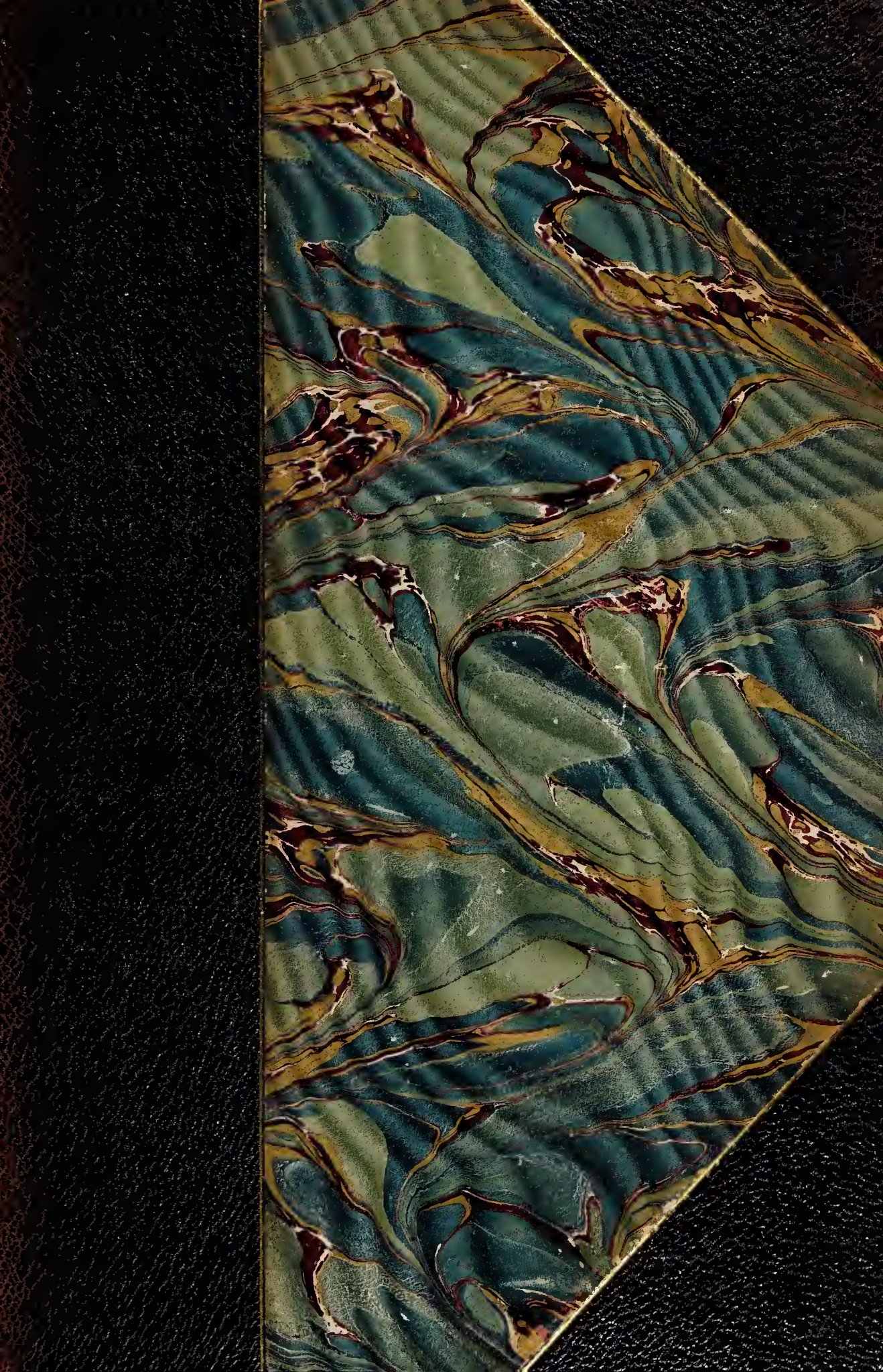

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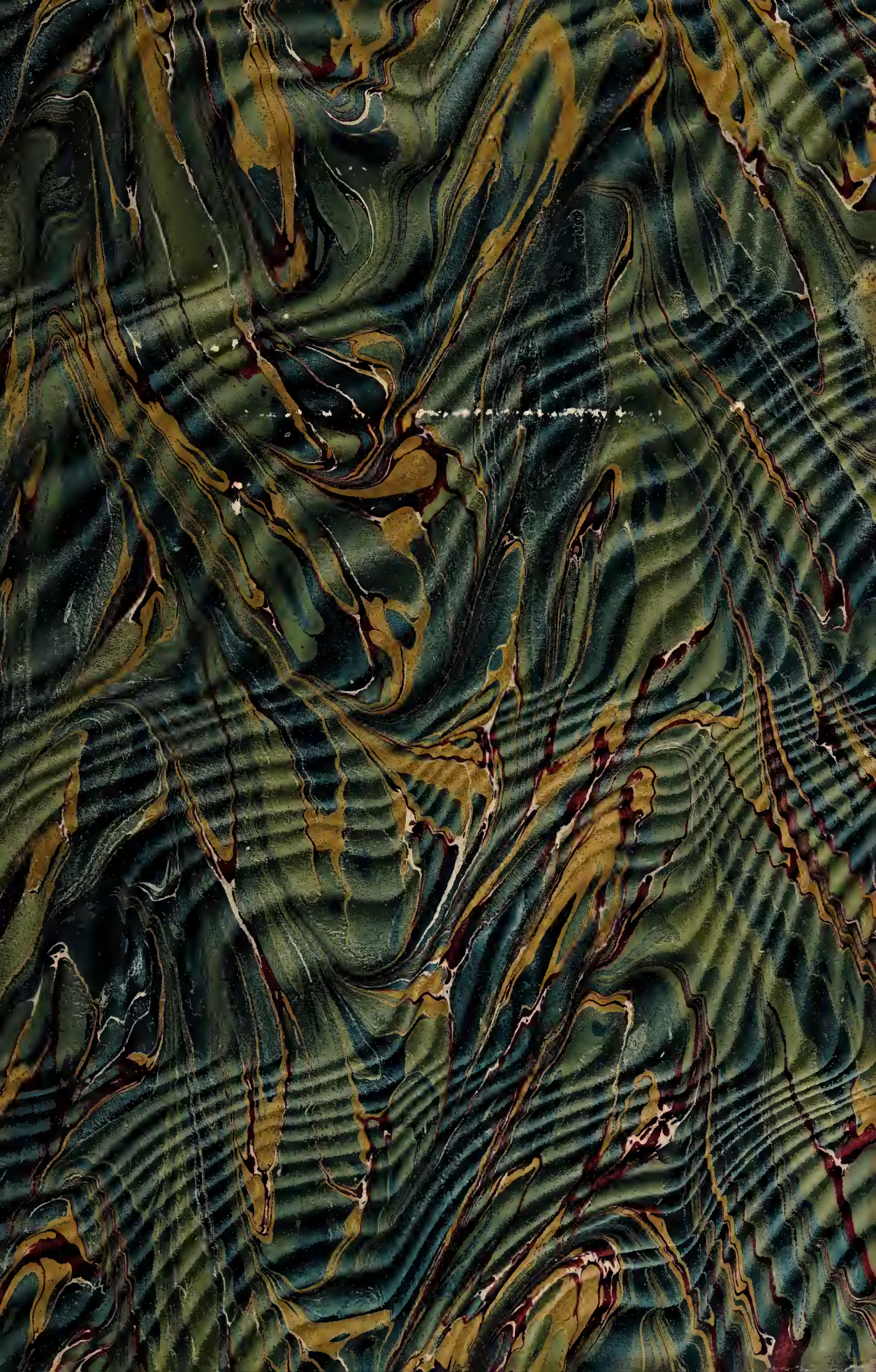

Lucy Cook.

1900.

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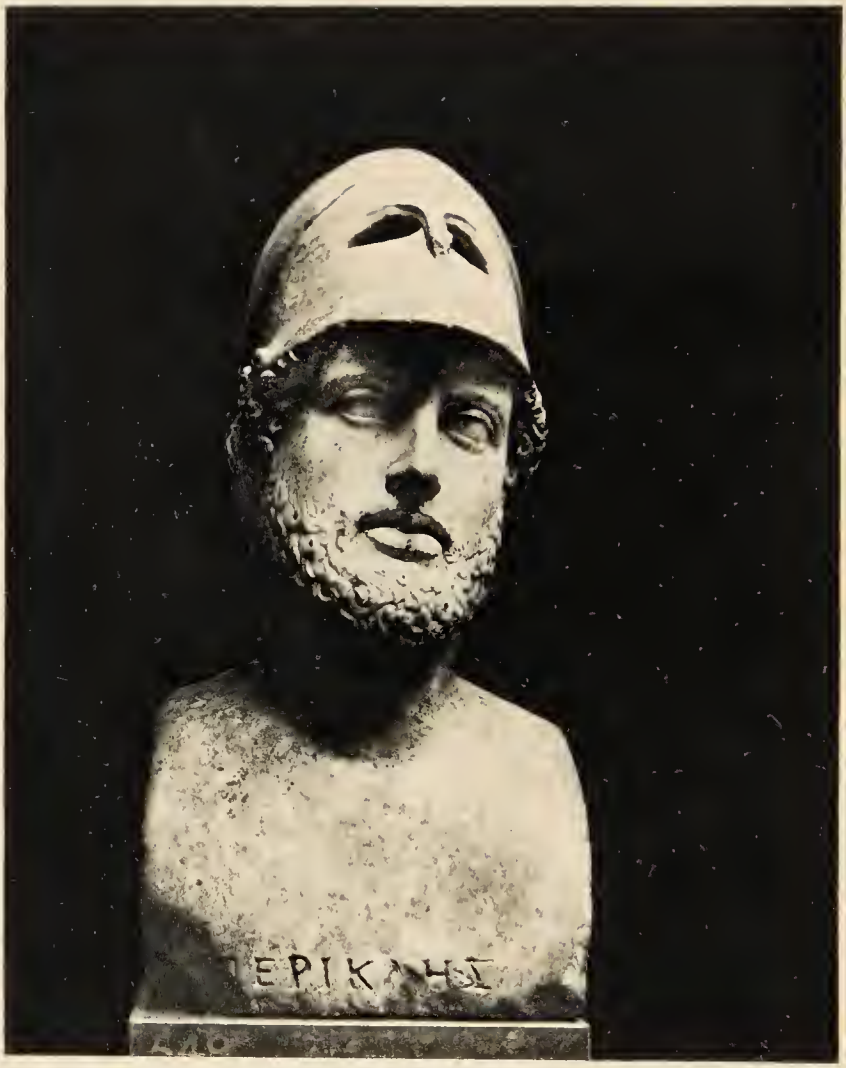
ΠΕΡΙΚΛΗΣ

Pericles.

From a bust in the British Museum.

WHITEHALL EDITION

The Miscellaneous Works

OF

LORD MACAULAY

EDITED BY HIS SISTER

LADY TREVELYAN

VOLUME VIII.

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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TO

KNIGHT'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO

KNIGHT'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

FRAGMENTS OF A ROMAN TALE

(JUNE, 1823)

. . . . . .

IT was an hour after noon. Ligarius was returning from the Campus Martius. He strolled through one of the streets which led to the Forum, settling his gown, and calculating the odds on the gladiators who were to fence at the approaching Saturnalia. While thus occupied, he overtook Flaminius, who, with a heavy step and a melancholy face, was sauntering in the same direction. The light-hearted young man plucked him by the sleeve.

"Good-day, Flaminius. Are you to be of Catiline's party this evening?"

"Not I."

"Why so? Your little Tarentine girl will break her heart."

"No matter. Catiline has the best cooks and the

finest wine in Rome. There are charming women at his parties. But the twelve-line board and the dice-box pay for all. The Gods confound me if I did not lose two millions of sesterces last night ! My villa at Tibur, and all the statues that my father the prætor brought from Ephesus, must go to the auctioneer. That is a high price, you will acknowledge, even for Phœnicopters, Chian, and Callinice."

" High indeed, by Pollux ! "

" And that is not the worst. I saw several of the leading senators this morning. Strange things are whispered in the higher political circles."

" The Gods confound the political circles. I have hated the name of politician ever since Sylla's proscription, when I was within a moment of having my throat cut by a politician, who took me for another politician. While there is a cask of Falernian in Campania, or a girl in the Suburra, I shall be too well employed to think on the subject."

" You will do well," said Flaminius, gravely, " to bestow some little consideration upon it at present. Otherwise, I fear, you will soon renew your acquaintance with politicians in a manner quite as unpleasant as that to which you allude."

" Averting Gods ! what do you mean ? "

" I will tell you. There are rumors of conspiracy. The order of things established by Lucius Sylla has excited the disgust of the people, and of a large party of the nobles. Some violent convulsion is expected."

" What is that to me ? I suppose that they will hardly proscribe the vintners and gladiators, or pass a law compelling every citizen to take a wife."

" You do not understand. Catiline is supposed to be

Ruins of the Forum, Rome.

the author of the revolutionary schemes. You must have heard bold opinions at his table repeatedly."

"I never listen to any opinions upon such subjects, bold or timid."

"Look to it. Your name has been mentioned."

"Mine! good Gods! I call Heaven to witness that I never so much as mentioned Senate, Consul, or Comitia in Catiline's house."

"Nobody suspects you of any participation in the inmost counsels of the party. But our great men surmise that you are among those whom he has bribed so high with beauty, or entangled so deeply in distress, that they are no longer their own masters. I shall never set foot within his threshold again. I have been solemnly warned by men who understand public affairs; and I advise you to be cautious."

The friends had now turned into the Forum, which was thronged with the gay and elegant youth of Rome. "I can tell you more," continued Flaminius; "somebody was remarking to the Consul yesterday how loosely a certain acquaintance of ours tied his girdle. 'Let him look to himself,' said Cicero, 'or the State may find a tighter girdle for his neck.'"

"Good Gods! who is it? You cannot surely mean—"

"There he is."

Flaminius pointed to a man who was pacing up and down the Forum at a little distance from them. He was in the prime of manhood. His personal advantages were extremely striking, and were displayed with an extravagant but not ungraceful foppery. His gown waved in loose folds; his long, dark curls were dressed with exquisite art, and shone and steamed with odors;

his step and gesture exhibited an elegant and commanding figure in every posture of polite languor. But his countenance formed a singular contrast to the general appearance of his person. The high and imperial brow, the keen aquiline features, the compressed mouth, the penetrating eye, indicated the highest degree of ability and decision. He seemed absorbed in intense meditation. With eyes fixed on the ground, and lips working in thought, he sauntered round the area, apparently unconscious how many of the young gallants of Rome were envying the taste of his dress, and the ease of his fashionable stagger.

"Good Heaven!" said Ligarius, "Caius Cæsar is as unlikely to be in a plot as I am."

"Not at all."

"He does nothing but game, feast, intrigue, read Greek, and write verses."

"You know nothing of Cæsar. Though he rarely addresses the Senate, he is considered as the finest speaker there, after the Consul. His influence with the multitude is immense. He will serve his rivals in public life as he served me last night at Catiline's. We were playing at the twelve-lines.[1]—Immense stakes. He laughed all the time, chatted with Valeria over his shoulder, kissed her hand between every two moves, and scarcely looked at the board. I thought that I had him. All at once I found my counters driven into the corner. Not a piece to move, by Hercules! It cost me two millions of sesterces. All the Gods and Goddesses confound him for it!"

[1] *Duodecim scripta*, a game of mixed chance and skill, which seems to have been very fashionable in the higher circles of Rome. The famous lawyer Mucius was renowned for his skill in it.—Cic., *Orat.*, i., 50.

"As to Valeria," said Ligarius, "I forgot to ask whether you have heard the news."

"Not a word. What?"

"I was told at the baths to-day that Cæsar escorted the lady home. Unfortunately, old Quintus Lutatius had come back from his villa in Campania, in a whim of jealousy. He was not expected for three days. There was a fine tumult. The old fool called for his sword and his slaves, cursed his wife, and swore that he would cut Cæsar's throat."

"And Cæsar?"

"He laughed, quoted Anacreon, trussed his gown round his left arm, closed with Quintus, flung him down, twisted his sword out of his hand, burst through the attendants, ran a freedman through the shoulder, and was in the street in an instant."

"Well done! Here he comes. Good-day, Caius."

Cæsar lifted his head at the salutation. His air of deep abstraction vanished, and he extended a hand to each of the friends.

"How are you, after your last night's exploit?"

"As well as possible," said Cæsar, laughing.

"In truth, we should rather ask how Quintus Lutatius is."

"He, I understand, is as well as can be expected of a man with a faithless spouse and a broken head. His freedman is most seriously hurt. Poor fellow! he shall have half of whatever I win to-night. Flaminius, you shall have your revenge at Catiline's."

"You are very kind. I do not intend to be at Catiline's till I wish to part with my town-house. My villa is gone already."

"Not at Catiline's, base spirit! You are not of his

mind, my gallant Ligarius. Dice, Chian, and the loveliest Greek singing-girl that was ever seen. Think of that, Ligarius. By Venus! she almost made me adore her by telling me that I talked Greek with the most Attic accent that she had heard in Italy."

"I doubt she will not say the same of me," replied Ligarius. "I am just as able to decipher an obelisk as to read a line of Homer."

"You barbarous Scythian, who had the care of your education?"

"An old fool—a Greek pedant—a Stoic. He told me that pain was no evil, and flogged me as if he thought so. At last, one day, in the middle of a lecture, I set fire to his enormous filthy beard, singed his face, and sent him roaring out of the house. There ended my studies. From that time to this I have had as little to do with Greece as the wine that your poor old friend Lutatius calls his delicious Samian."

"Well done, Ligarius. I hate a Stoic. I wish Marcus Cato had a beard, that you might singe it for him. The fool talked his two hours in the Senate yesterday, without changing a muscle of his face. He looked as savage and as motionless as the mask in which Roscius acted Alecto. I detest everything connected with him."

"Except his sister, Servilia."

"True. She is a lovely woman."

"They say that you have told her so, Caius."

"So I have."

"And that she was not angry."

"What woman is?"

"Ay; but they say—"

"No matter what they say. Common fame lies like

a Greek rhetorician. You might know so much, Ligarius, without reading the philosophers. But come, I will introduce you to little dark-eyed Zoe."

"I tell you I can speak no Greek."

"More shame for you. It is high time that you should begin. You will never have such a charming instructress. Of what was your father thinking when he sent for an old Stoic with a long beard to teach you? There is no language-mistress like a handsome woman. When I was at Athens, I learned more Greek from a pretty flower-girl in the Peiræus than from all the Portico and the Academy. She was no Stoic, Heaven knows. But come along to Zoe. I will be your interpreter. Woo her in honest Latin, and I will turn it into elegant Greek between the throws of dice. I can make love and mind my game at once, as Flaminius can tell you."

"Well, then, to be plain, Cæsar, Flaminius has been talking to me about plots, and suspicions, and politicians. I never plagued myself with such things since Sylla's and Marius's days; and then I never could see much difference between the parties. All that I am sure of is this, that those who meddle with such affairs are generally stabbed or strangled. And, though I like Greek wine and handsome women, I do not wish to risk my neck for them. Now, tell me as a friend, Caius—is there no danger?"

"Danger!" repeated Cæsar, with a short, fierce, disdainful laugh; "what danger do you apprehend?"

"That you should best know," said Flaminius; "you are far more intimate with Catiline than I. But I advise you to be cautious. The leading men entertain strong suspicions."

Cæsar drew up his figure from its ordinary state of graceful relaxation into an attitude of commanding dignity, and replied in a voice of which the deep and impassioned melody formed a strange contrast to the humorous and affected tone of his ordinary conversation. "Let them suspect. They suspect because they know what they have deserved. What have they done for Rome? What for mankind? Ask the citizens. Ask the provinces. Have they had any other object than to perpetuate their own exclusive power, and to keep us under the yoke of an oligarchical tyranny, which unites in itself the worst evils of every other system, and combines more than Athenian turbulence with more than Persian despotism?"

"Good Gods, Cæsar! It is not safe for you to speak, or for us to listen to such things, at such a crisis."

"Judge for yourselves what you will hear. I will judge for myself what I will speak. I was not twenty years old when I defied Lucius Sylla, surrounded by the spears of legionaries and the daggers of assassins. Do you suppose that I stand in awe of his paltry successors, who have inherited a power which they never could have acquired; who would imitate his proscriptions, though they have never equalled his conquests?"

"Pompey is almost as little to be trifled with as Sylla. I heard a consular senator say that, in consequence of the present alarming state of affairs, he would probably be recalled from the command assigned to him by the Manilian law."

"Let him come—the pupil of Sylla's butcheries—the gleaner of Lucullus's trophies—the thief-taker of the Senate."

"For Heaven's sake, Caius !—if you knew what the Consul said—"

"Something about himself, no doubt. Pity that such talents should be coupled with such cowardice and coxcombry. He is the finest speaker living—infinitely superior to what Hortensius was in his best days ; a charming companion, except when he tells over for the twentieth time all the jokes that he made at Verres's trial. But he is the despicable tool of a despicable party."

"Your language, Caius, convinces me that the reports which have been circulated are not without foundation. I will venture to prophesy that within a few months the republic will pass through a whole Odyssey of strange adventures."

"I believe so ; an Odyssey of which Pompey will be the Polyphemus, and Cicero the Siren. I would have the State imitate Ulysses : show no mercy to the former ; but contrive, if it can be done, to listen to the enchanting voice of the other, without being seduced by it to destruction."

"But whom can your party produce as rivals to these two famous leaders ?"

"Time will show. I would hope that there may arise a man whose genius to conquer, to conciliate, and to govern may unite in one cause an oppressed and divided people ;—may do all that Sylla should have done, and exhibit the magnificent spectacle of a great nation directed by a great mind."

"And where is such a man to be found ?"

"Perhaps where you would least expect to find him. Perhaps he may be one whose powers have hitherto been concealed in domestic or literary retirement.

Perhaps he may be one who, while waiting for some adequate excitement, for some worthy opportunity, squanders on trifles a genius before which may yet be humbled the sword of Pompey and the gown of Cicero. Perhaps he may now be disputing with a sophist ; perhaps prattling with a mistress ; perhaps ''—and, as he spoke, he turned away, and resumed his lounge—" strolling in the Forum."

. . . . . .

It was almost midnight. The party had separated. Catiline and Cethegus were still conferring in the supper-room, which was, as usual, the highest apartment of the house. It formed a cupola, from which windows opened on the flat roof that surrounded it. To this terrace Zoe had retired. With eyes dimmed with fond and melancholy tears, she leaned over the balustrade, to catch the last glimpse of the departing form of Cæsar, as it grew more and more indistinct in the moonlight. Had he any thought of her ? Any love for her ? He, the favorite of the high-born beauties of Rome, the most splendid, the most graceful, the most eloquent of its nobles ? It could not be. His voice had, indeed, been touchingly soft whenever he addressed her. There had been a fascinating tenderness even in the vivacity of his look and conversation. But such were always the manners of Cæsar towards women. He had wreathed a sprig of myrtle in her hair as she was singing. She took it from her dark ringlets, and kissed it, and wept over it, and thought of the sweet legends of her own dear Greece—of youths and girls who, pining away in hopeless love, had been transformed into flowers by the compassion of the Gods ; and she wished to become a flower, which Cæsar might

sometimes touch, though he should touch it only to weave a crown for some prouder and happier mistress.

She was roused from her musings by the loud step and voice of Cethegus, who was pacing furiously up and down the supper-room.

"May all the Gods confound me, if Cæsar be not the deepest traitor, or the most miserable idiot, that ever intermeddled with a plot!"

Zoe shuddered. She drew nearer to the window. She stood concealed from observation by the curtain of fine network which hung over the aperture, to exclude the annoying insects of the climate.

"And you, too!" continued Cethegus, turning fiercely on his accomplice; "you to take his part against me!—you, who proposed the scheme yourself!"

"My dear Caius Cethegus, you will not understand me. I proposed the scheme; and I will join in executing it. But policy is as necessary to our plans as boldness. I did not wish to startle Cæsar—to lose his co-operation—perhaps to send him off with an information against us to Cicero and Catulus. He was so indignant at your suggestion, that all my dissimulation was scarcely sufficient to prevent a total rupture."

"Indignant! The Gods confound him!—He prated about humanity, and generosity, and moderation. By Hercules, I have not heard such a lecture since I was with Xenochares at Rhodes."

"Cæsar is made up of inconsistencies. He has boundless ambition, unquestioned courage, admirable sagacity. Yet I have frequently observed in him a womanish weakness at the sight of pain. I remember that once one of his slaves was taken ill while carrying his litter. He alighted, put the fellow in his place, and

walked home in a fall of snow. I wonder that you could be so ill-advised as to talk to him of massacre, and pillage, and conflagration. You might have foreseen that such propositions would disgust a man of his temper."

"I do not know. I have not your self-command, Lucius. I hate such conspirators. What is the use of them? We must have blood—blood—hacking and tearing work—bloody work!"

"Do not grind your teeth, my dear Caius; and lay down the carving-knife. By Hercules, you have cut up all the stuffing of the couch."

"No matter; we shall have couches enough soon—and down to stuff them with—and purple to cover them—and pretty women to loll on them—unless this fool, and such as he, spoil our plans. I had something else to say. The essenced fop wishes to seduce Zoe from me."

"Impossible! You misconstrue the ordinary gallantries which he is in the habit of paying to every handsome face."

"Curse on his ordinary gallantries, and his verses, and his compliments, and his sprigs of myrtle! If Cæsar should dare—by Hercules, I will tear him to pieces in the middle of the Forum!"

"Trust his destruction to me. We must use his talents and influence—thrust him upon every danger—make him our instrument while we are contending—our peace-offering to the Senate if we fail—our first victim if we succeed."

"Hark! what noise was that?"

"Somebody in the terrace!—lend me your dagger."

Catiline rushed to the window. Zoe was standing in

the shade. He stepped out. She darted into the room —passed like a flash of lightning by the startled Cethegus—flew down the stairs—through the court—through the vestibule—through the street. Steps, voices, lights, came fast and confusedly behind her; but with the speed of love and terror she gained upon her pursuers. She fled through the wilderness of unknown and dusky streets, till she found herself, breathless and exhausted, in the midst of a crowd of gallants, who, with chaplets on their heads and torches in their hands, were reeling from the portico of a stately mansion.

The foremost of the throng was a youth whose slender figure and beautiful countenance seemed hardly consistent with his sex. But the feminine delicacy of his features rendered more frightful the mingled sensuality and ferocity of their expression. The libertine audacity of his stare, and the grotesque foppery of his apparel, seemed to indicate at least a partial insanity. Flinging one arm round Zoe, and tearing away her veil with the other, he disclosed to the gaze of his thronging companions the regular features and large dark eyes which characterize Athenian beauty.

"Clodius has all the luck to-night," cried Ligarius.

"Not so, by Hercules!" said Marcus Cœlius; "the girl is fairly our common prize: we will fling dice for her. The Venus[1] throw, as it ought to do, shall decide."

"Let me go—let me go, for Heaven's sake!" cried Zoe, struggling with Clodius.

"What a charming Greek accent she has! Come into the house, my little Athenian nightingale."

[1] Venus was the Roman term for the highest throw on the dice.

"Oh! what will become of me? If you have mothers —if you have sisters—"

"Clodius has a sister," muttered Ligarius, "or he is much belied."

"By Heaven, she is weeping!" said Clodius.

"If she were not evidently a Greek," said Cœlius, "I should take her for a vestal virgin."

"And if she were a vestal virgin," cried Clodius, fiercely, "it should not deter me! This way;—no struggling!—no screaming!"

"Struggling! screaming!" exclaimed a gay and commanding voice; "you are making very ungentle love, Clodius."

The whole party started. Cæsar had mingled with them unperceived.

The sound of his voice thrilled through the very heart of Zoe. With a convulsive effort she burst from the grasp of her insolent admirer, flung herself at the feet of Cæsar, and clasped his knees. The moon shone full on her agitated and imploring face: her lips moved, but she uttered no sound. He gazed at her for an instant—raised her—clasped her to his bosom. "Fear nothing, my sweet Zoe." Then, with folded arms, and a smile of placid defiance, he placed himself between her and Clodius.

Clodius staggered forward, flushed with wine and rage, and uttering alternately a curse and a hiccup.

"By Pollux, this passes a jest! Cæsar, how dare you insult me thus?"

"A jest! I am as serious as a Jew on the Sabbath. Insult you? for such a pair of eyes I would insult the whole consular bench, or I should be as insensible as King Psammis's mummy."

"Good Gods, Cæsar!" said Marcus Cœlius, interposing, "you cannot think it worth while to get into a brawl for a little Greek girl?"

"Why not? The Greek girls have used me as well as those of Rome. Besides, the whole reputation of my gallantry is at stake. Give up such a lovely woman to that drunken boy! My character would be gone forever. No more perfumed tablets, full of vows and raptures. No more toying with fingers at the Circus. No more evening walks along the Tiber. No more hiding in chests, or jumping from windows. I, the favored suitor of half the white stoles in Rome, could never again aspire above a freedwoman. You a man of gallantry, and think of such a thing! For shame, my dear Cœlius! Do not let Clodia hear of it."

While Cæsar spoke, he had been engaged in keeping Clodius at arm's-length. The rage of the frantic libertine increased as the struggle continued. "Stand back, as you value your life!" he cried; "I will pass!"

"Not this way, sweet Clodius. I have too much regard for you to suffer you to make love at such disadvantage. You smell too much of Falernian at present. Would you stifle your mistress? By Hercules! you are fit to kiss nobody now, except old Piso, when he is tumbling home in the morning from the vintners."[1]

Clodius plunged his hand into his bosom and drew a little dagger, the faithful companion of many desperate adventures.

"Oh, Gods! he will be murdered!" cried Zoe.

The whole throng of revellers was in agitation. The street fluctuated with torches and lifted hands. It was but for a moment. Cæsar watched with a steady eye

[1] Cic., *in Pis.*

the descending hand of Clodius, arrested the blow, seized his antagonist by the throat, and flung him against one of the pillars of the portico with such violence that he rolled, stunned and senseless, on the ground.

"He is killed!" cried several voices.

"Fair self-defence, by Hercules!" said Marcus Cœlius. "Bear witness, you all saw him draw his dagger."

"He is not dead—he breathes," said Ligarius. "Carry him into the house; he is dreadfully bruised."

The rest of the party retired with Clodius. Cœlius turned to Cæsar.

"By all the Gods, Caius! you have won your lady fairly. A splendid victory! You deserve a triumph."

"What a madman Clodius has become!"

"Intolerable. But come and sup with me on the Nones. You have no objection to meet the Consul?"

"Cicero? None at all. We need not talk politics. Our old dispute about Plato and Epicurus will furnish us with plenty of conversation. So reckon upon me, my dear Marcus, and farewell."

Cæsar and Zoe turned away. As soon as they were beyond hearing, she began, in great agitation:

"Cæsar, you are in danger. I know all. I overheard Catiline and Cethegus. You are engaged in a project which must lead to certain destruction."

"My beautiful Zoe, I live only for glory and pleasure. For these I have never hesitated to hazard an existence which they alone render valuable to me. In the present case, I can assure you that our scheme presents the fairest hopes of success."

"So much the worse. You do not know—you do

not understand me. I speak not of open peril, but of secret treachery. Catiline hates you ; Cethegus hates you ;—your destruction is resolved. If you survive the contest, you perish in the first hour of victory. They detest you for your moderation—they are eager for blood and plunder. I have risked my life to bring you this warning ; but that is of little moment. Farewell ! Be happy."

Cæsar stopped her. " Do you fly from my thanks, dear Zoe ? "

" I wish not for your thanks, but for your safety ; I desire not to defraud Valeria or Servilia of one caress, extorted from gratitude or pity. Be my feelings what they may, I have learned in a fearful school to endure and to suppress them. I have been taught to abase a proud spirit to the claps and hisses of the vulgar ; to smile on suitors who united the insults of a despicable pride to the endearments of a loathsome fondness ; to affect sprightliness with an aching head, and eyes from which tears were ready to gush ; to feign love with curses on my lips, and madness in my brain. Who feels for me any esteem, any tenderness ? Who will shed a tear over the nameless grave which will soon shelter from cruelty and scorn the broken heart of the poor Athenian girl ? But you, who alone have addressed her in her degradation with a voice of kindness and respect, farewell. Sometimes think of me ; not with sorrow—no ; I could bear your ingratitude, but not your distress. Yet, if it will not pain you too much, in distant days, when your lofty hopes and destinies are accomplished—on the evening of some mighty victory—in the chariot of some magnificent triumph—think on one who loved you with that ex-

ceeding love which only the miserable can feel. Think that, wherever her exhausted frame may have sunk beneath the sensibilities of a tortured spirit—in whatever hovel or whatever vault she may have closed her eyes—whatever strange scenes of horror and pollution may have surrounded her dying bed—your shape was the last that swam before her sight ; your voice the last sound that was ringing in her ears. Yet turn your face to me, Cæsar. Let me carry away one last look of those features, and then—'' He turned round. He looked at her. He hid his face on her bosom and burst into tears. With sobs long and loud, and convulsive as those of a terrified child, he poured forth on her bosom the tribute of impetuous and uncontrollable emotion. He raised his head ; but he in vain struggled to restore composure to the brow which had confronted the frown of Sylla, and the lips which had rivalled the eloquence of Cicero. He several times attempted to speak, but in vain ; and his voice still faltered with tenderness, when, after a pause of several minutes, he thus addressed her :

'' My own dear Zoe, your love has been bestowed on one who, if he cannot merit, can at least appreciate and adore you. Beings of similar loveliness, and similar devotedness of affection, mingled, in all my boyish dreams of greatness, with visions of curule chairs and ivory cars, marshalled legions and laurelled fasces. Such I have endeavored to find in the world ; and, in their stead, I have met with selfishness, with vanity, with frivolity, with falsehood. The life which you have preserved is a boon less valuable than the affection—''

'' Oh! Cæsar,'' interrupted the blushing Zoe, '' think

only on your own security at present. If you feel as you speak—but you are only mocking me—or perhaps your compassion—''

'' By Heaven !—by every oath that is binding—''

'' Alas ! alas ! Cæsar, were not all the same oaths sworn yesterday to Valeria ? But I will trust you, at least so far as to partake your present dangers. Flight may be necessary ;—form your plans. Be they what they may, there is one who, in exile, in poverty, in peril, asks only to wander, to beg, to die with you.''

'' My Zoe, I do not anticipate any such necessity. To renounce the conspiracy without renouncing the principles on which it was originally undertaken—to elude the vengeance of the Senate without losing the confidence of the people—is, indeed, an arduous, but not an impossible, task. I owe it to myself and to my country to make the attempt. There is still ample time for consideration. At present I am too happy in love to think of ambition or danger.''

They had reached the door of a stately palace. Cæsar struck it. It was instantly opened by a slave. Zoe found herself in a magnificent hall, surrounded by pillars of green marble, between which were ranged the statues of the long line of Julian nobles.

'' Call Endymion,'' said Cæsar.

The confidential freedman made his appearance, not without a slight smile, which his patron's good-nature emboldened him to hazard, at perceiving the beautiful Athenian.

'' Arm my slaves, Endymion ; there are reasons for precaution. Let them relieve each other on guard during the night. Zoe, my love, my preserver, why

are your cheeks so pale? Let me kiss some bloom into them. How you tremble! Endymion, a flask of Samian, and some fruit. Bring them to my apartments. This way, my sweet Zoe."

. . . . . .

ON THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE
(JUNE, 1823)

THIS is the age of societies. There is scarcely one Englishman in ten who has not belonged to some association for distributing books, or for prosecuting them ; for sending invalids to the hospital, or beggars to the tread-mill ; for giving plate to the rich, or blankets to the poor. To be the most absurd institution among so many institutions is no small distinction ; it seems, however, to belong indisputably to the Royal Society of Literature. At the first establishment of that ridiculous academy, every sensible man predicted that, in spite of regal patronage and episcopal management, it would do nothing, or do harm. And it will scarcely be denied that those expectations have hitherto been fulfilled.

I do not attack the founders of the association. Their characters are respectable ; their motives, I am willing to believe, were laudable. But I feel, and it is the duty of every literary man to feel, a strong jealousy of their proceedings. Their society can be innocent only while it continues to be despicable. Should they ever possess the power to encourage merit, they must also possess the power to depress it. Which power will be more frequently exercised, let every one who

has studied literary history, let every one who has studied human nature, declare.

Envy and faction insinuate themselves into all communities. They often disturb the peace, and pervert the decisions, of benevolent and scientific associations. But it is in literary academies that they exert the most extensive and pernicious influence. In the first place, the principles of literary criticism, though equally fixed with those on which the chemist and the surgeon proceed, are by no means equally recognized. Men are rarely able to assign a reason for their approbation or dislike on questions of taste ; and therefore they willingly submit to any guide who boldly asserts his claim to superior discernment. It is more difficult to ascertain and establish the merits of a poem than the powers of a machine or the benefits of a new remedy. Hence it is in literature that quackery is most easily puffed and excellence most easily decried.

In some degree this argument applies to academies of the fine arts ; and it is fully confirmed by all that I have ever heard of that institution which annually disfigures the walls of Somerset House with an acre of spoiled canvas. But a literary tribunal is incomparably more dangerous. Other societies, at least, have no tendency to call forth any opinions on those subjects which most agitate and inflame the minds of men. The sceptic and the zealot, the revolutionist and placeman, meet on common ground in a gallery of paintings or a laboratory of science. They can praise or censure without reference to the differences which exist between them. In a literary body this can never be the case. Literature is, and always must be, inseparably blended with politics and theology ; it is the great engine which

moves the feelings of a people on the most momentous questions. It is, therefore, impossible that any society can be formed so impartial as to consider the literary character of an individual abstracted from the opinions which his writings inculcate. It is not to be hoped, perhaps it is not to be wished, that the feelings of the man should be so completely forgotten in the duties of the academician. The consequences are evident. The honors and censures of this Star-chamber of the Muses will be awarded according to the prejudices of the particular sect or faction which may at the time predominate. Whigs would canvass against a Southey, Tories against a Byron. Those who might at first protest against such conduct as unjust would soon adopt it on the plea of retaliation ; and the general good of literature, for which the society was professedly instituted, would be forgotten in the stronger claims of political and religious partiality.

Yet even this is not the worst. Should the institution ever acquire any influence, it will afford most pernicious facilities to every malignant coward who may desire to blast a reputation which he envies. It will furnish a secure ambuscade, behind which the Maroons of literature may take a certain and deadly aim. The editorial *we* has often been fatal to rising genius; though all the world knows that it is only a form of speech, very often employed by a single needy blockhead. The academic *we* would have a far greater and more ruinous influence. Numbers, while they increased the effect, would diminish the shame, of injustice. The advantages of an open and those of an anonymous attack would be combined ; and the authority of avowal would be united to the security of concealment. The

serpents in Virgil, after they had destroyed Laocoon, found an asylum from the vengeance of the enraged people behind the shield of the statue of Minerva. And in the same manner, everything that is grovelling and venomous, everything that can hiss, and everything that can sting, would take sanctuary in the recesses of this new temple of wisdom.

The French academy was, of all such associations, the most widely and the most justly celebrated. It was founded by the greatest of ministers; it was patronized by successive Kings ; it numbered in its lists most of the eminent French writers. Yet what benefit has literature derived from its labors ? What is its history but an uninterrupted record of servile compliances—of paltry artifices—of deadly quarrels—of perfidious friendships ? Whether governed by the Court, by the Sorbonne, or by the Philosophers, it was always equally powerful for evil, and equally impotent for good. I might speak of the attacks by which it attempted to depress the rising fame of Corneille ; I might speak of the reluctance with which it gave its tardy confirmation to the applauses which the whole civilized world had bestowed on the genius of Voltaire. I might prove by overwhelming evidence that, to the latest period of its existence, even under the superintendence of the all-accomplished D'Alembert, it continued to be a scene of the fiercest animosities and the basest intrigues. I might cite Piron's epigrams, and Marmontel's memoirs, and Montesquieu's letters. But I hasten on to another topic.

One of the modes by which our Society proposes to encourage merit is the distribution of prizes. The munificence of the King has enabled it to offer an an-

nual premium of a hundred guineas for the best essay in prose, and another of fifty guineas for the best poem, which may be transmitted to it. This is very laughable. In the first place, the judges may err. Those imperfections of human intellect to which, as the Articles of the Church tell us, even general councils are subject, may possibly be found even in the Royal Society of Literature. The French Academy, as I have already said, was the most illustrious assembly of the kind, and numbered among its associates men much more distinguished than ever will assemble at Mr. Hatchard's to rummage the box of the English Society. Yet this famous body gave a poetical prize, for which Voltaire was a candidate, to a fellow who wrote some verses about *the frozen and the burning pole.*

Yet, granting that the prizes were always awarded to the best composition, that composition, I say without hesitation, will always be bad. A prize poem is like a prize sheep. The object of the competitor for the agricultural premium is to produce an animal fit, not to be eaten, but to be weighed. Accordingly, he pampers his victim into morbid and unnatural fatness ; and, when it is in such a state that it would be sent away in disgust from any table, he offers it to the judges. The object of the poetical candidate, in like manner, is to produce, not a good poem, but a poem of that exact degree of frigidity or bombast which may appear to his censors to be correct or sublime. Compositions thus constructed will always be worthless. The few excellences which they may contain will have an exotic aspect and flavor. In general, prize sheep are good for nothing but to make tallow-candles, and prize poems are good for nothing but to light them.

The first subject proposed by the Society to the poets of England was Dartmoor. I thought that they intended a covert sarcasm at their own projects. Their institution was a literary Dartmoor scheme—a plan for forcing into cultivation the waste lands of intellect—for raising poetical produce, by means of bounties, from soil too meagre to have yielded any returns in the natural course of things. The plan for the cultivation of Dartmoor has, I hear, been abandoned. I hope that this may be an omen of the fate of the Society.

In truth, this seems by no means improbable. They have been offering for several years the rewards which the King placed at their disposal, and have not, as far as I can learn, been able to find in their box one composition which they have deemed worthy of publication. At least no publication has taken place. The associates may, perhaps, be astonished at this ; but I will attempt to explain it, after the manner of ancient times, by means of an apologue.

About four hundred years after the deluge, King Gomer Chephoraod reigned in Babylon. He united all the characteristics of an excellent sovereign. He made good laws, won great battles, and whitewashed long streets. He was, in consequence, idolized by his people, and panegyrized by many poets and orators. A book was then a serious undertaking. Neither paper nor any similar material had been invented. Authors were, therefore, under the necessity of inscribing their compositions on massive bricks. Some of these Babylonian records are still preserved in European museums; but the language in which they are written has never been deciphered. Gomer Chephoraod was so popular that the clay of all the plains round the Euphrates could

scarcely furnish brick-kilns enough for his eulogists. It is recorded in particular that Pharonezzar, the Assyrian Pindar, published a bridge and four walls in his praise.

One day the King was going in state from his palace to the Temple of Belus. During this procession it was lawful for any Babylonian to offer any petition or suggestion to his sovereign. As the chariot passed before a vintner's shop, a large company, apparently half-drunk, sallied forth into the street; and one of them thus addressed the King:

"Gomer Chephoraod, live forever! It appears to thy servants that of all the productions of the earth good wine is the best, and bad wine is the worst. Good wine makes the heart cheerful, the eyes bright, the speech ready. Bad wine confuses the head, disorders the stomach, makes us quarrelsome at night, and sick the next morning. Now, therefore, let my lord the King take order that thy servants may drink good wine."

"And how is this to be done?" said the good-natured prince.

"O King," said his monitor, "this is most easy. Let the King make a decree, and seal it with his royal signet; and let it be proclaimed that the King will give ten she-asses, and ten slaves, and ten changes of raiment, every year, unto the man who shall make ten measures of the best wine. And whosoever wishes for the she-asses, and the slaves, and the raiment, let him send the ten measures of wine to thy servants, and we will drink thereof and judge. So shall there be much good wine in Assyria."

The project pleased Gomer Chephoraod. "Be it so," said he. The people shouted. The petitioners prostrated themselves in gratitude. The same night heralds

were despatched to bear the intelligence to the remotest districts of Assyria.

After a due interval the wines began to come in ; and the examiners assembled to adjudge the prize. The first vessel was unsealed. Its odor was such that the judges, without tasting it, pronounced unanimous condemnation. The next was opened : it had a villanous taste of clay. The third was sour and vapid. They proceeded from one cask of execrable liquor to another, till at length, in absolute nausea, they gave up the investigation.

The next morning they all assembled at the gate of the King, with pale faces and aching heads. They owned that they could not recommend any competitor as worthy of the rewards. They swore that the wine was little better than poison, and entreated permission to resign the office of deciding between such detestable potions.

" In the name of Belus, how can this have happened ? " said the King.

Merolchazzar, the high-priest, muttered something about the anger of the Gods at the toleration shown to a sect of impious heretics who ate pigeons broiled, " whereas," said he, " our religion commands us to eat them roasted. Now therefore, O King," continued this respectable divine, " give command to thy men of war, and let them smite the disobedient people with the sword, them, and their wives, and their children, and let their houses and their flocks and their herds be given to thy servants the priests. Then shall the land yield its increase, and the fruits of the earth shall be no more blasted by the vengeance of Heaven."

" Nay," said the King, " the ground lies under no

general curse from Heaven. The season has been singularly good. The wine which thou didst thyself drink at the banquet a few nights ago, O venerable Merolchazzar, was of this year's vintage. Dost thou not remember how thou didst praise it? It was the same night that thou wast inspired by Belus, and didst reel to and fro, and discourse sacred mysteries. These things are too hard for me. I comprehend them not. The only wine which is bad is that which is sent to my judges. Who can expound this to us?"

The King scratched his head. Upon which all the courtiers scratched their heads.

He then ordered proclamation to be made, that a purple robe and a golden chain should be given to the man who could solve this difficulty.

An old philosopher, who had been observed to smile rather disdainfully when the prize had first been instituted, came forward and spoke thus:

"Gomer Chephoraod, live forever! Marvel not at that which has happened. It was no miracle, but a natural event. How could it be otherwise? It is true that much good wine has been made this year. But who would send it in for thy rewards? Thou knowest Ascobaruch, who hath the great vineyards in the north, and Cohahiroth, who sendeth wine every year from the south over the Persian Gulf. Their wines are so delicious that ten measures thereof are sold for a hundred talents of silver. Thinkest thou that they will exchange them for thy slaves and thine asses? What would thy prize profit any who have vineyards in rich soils?"

"Who, then," said one of the judges, "are the wretches who sent us this poison?"

"Blame them not," said the sage, "seeing that you have been the authors of the evil. They are men whose lands are poor, and have never yielded them any returns equal to the prizes which the King proposed. Wherefore, knowing that the lords of the fruitful vineyards would not enter into competition with them, they planted vines, some on rocks, and some in light sandy soil, and some in deep clay. Hence their wines are bad; for no culture or reward will make barren land bear good vines. Know therefore, assuredly, that your prizes have increased the quantity of bad but not of good wine."

There was a long silence. At length the King spoke. "Give him the purple robe and the chain of gold. Throw the wines into the Euphrates; and proclaim that the Royal Society of Wines is dissolved."

SCENES FROM "ATHENIAN REVELS"
(JANUARY, 1824)

A DRAMA

I

SCENE—*A Street in Athens*

Enter CALLIDEMUS *and* SPEUSIPPUS

CALLIDEMUS

SO, you young reprobate! You must be a man of wit, forsooth, and a man of quality! You must spend as if you were as rich as Nicias, and prate as if you were as wise as Pericles! You must dangle after sophists and pretty women! And I must pay for all! I must sup on thyme and onions, while you are swallowing thrushes and hares! I must drink water, that you may play the cottabus[1] with Chian wine. I must wander about as ragged as Pauson,[2] that you may be as fine as Alcibiades! I must lie on bare boards, with

[1] This game consisted in projecting wine out of cups; it was a diversion extremely fashionable at Athenian entertainments.

[2] Pauson was an Athenian painter, whose name was synonymous with beggary. See Aristophanes; *Plutus*, 602. From his poverty, I am inclined to suppose that he painted historical pictures.

a stone [1] for my pillow, and a rotten mat for my cover-lid, by the light of a wretched winking lamp, while you are marching in state, with as many torches as one sees at the feast of Ceres, to thunder with your hatchet [2] at the doors of half the Ionian ladies in Peiræus.[3]

SPEUSIPPUS

Why, thou unreasonable old man! Thou most shameless of fathers!—

CALLIDEMUS

Ungrateful wretch! dare you talk so? Are you not afraid of the thunders of Jupiter?

SPEUSIPPUS

Jupiter thunder! nonsense! Anaxagoras says that thunder is only an explosion produced by—

CALLIDEMUS

He does? Would that it had fallen on his head for his pains!

SPEUSIPPUS

Nay: talk rationally.

CALLIDEMUS

Rationally! You audacious young sophist! I will talk rationally. Do you know that I am your father? What quibble can you make upon that?

[1] See Aristophanes; *Plutus*, 542.

[2] See Theocritus; *Idyl*, ii., 128.

[3] This was the most disreputable part of Athens. See Aristophanes; *Pax*, 165.

Gate of Agora, Athens.

SPEUSIPPUS

Do I know that you are my father? Let us take the question to pieces, as Melesigenes would say. First, then, we must inquire what is knowledge? Secondly, what is a father? Now, knowledge, as Socrates said the other day to Theætetus,[1]—

CALLIDEMUS

Socrates! What! the ragged flat-nosed old dotard, who walks about all day barefoot, and filches cloaks, and dissects gnats, and shoes[2] fleas with wax?

SPEUSIPPUS

All fiction! All trumped up by Aristophanes!

CALLIDEMUS

By Pallas, if he is in the habit of putting shoes on his fleas, he is kinder to them than to himself. But listen to me, boy; if you go on in this way, you will be ruined. There is an argument for you. Go to your Socrates and your Melesigenes, and tell them to refute that. Ruined! Do you hear?

SPEUSIPPUS

Ruined!

CALLIDEMUS

Ay, by Jupiter! Is such a show as you make to be supported on nothing? During all the last war, I made not an obol from my farm; the Peloponnesian locusts came almost as regularly as the Pleiades;—corn

[1] See Plato's *Theætetus*.

[2] See Aristophanes; *Nubes*, 150.

burned—olives stripped—fruit-trees cut down—wells stopped up—and, just when peace came, and I hoped that all would turn out well, you must begin to spend as if you had all the mines of Thasus at command.

SPEUSIPPUS

Now, by Neptune, who delights in horses—

CALLIDEMUS

If Neptune delights in horses, he does not resemble me. You must ride at the Panathenæa on a horse fit for the great King !—four acres of my best vines went for that folly. You must retrench, or you will have nothing to eat. Does not Anaxagoras mention, among his other discoveries, that when a man has nothing to eat he dies ?

SPEUSIPPUS

You are deceived. My friends—

CALLIDEMUS

Oh yes ! your friends will notice you, doubtless, when you are squeezing through the crowd, on a winter's day, to warm yourself at the fire of the baths ; or when you are fighting with beggars and beggars' dogs for the scraps of a sacrifice ; or when you are glad to earn three wretched obols [1] by listening all day to lying speeches and crying children.

SPEUSIPPUS

There are other means of support.

[1] The stipend of an Athenian juryman.

CALLIDEMUS

What! I suppose you will wander from house to house, like that wretched buffoon Philippus,[1] and beg everybody who has asked a supper-party to be so kind as to feed you and laugh at you; or you will turn sycophant; you will get a bunch of grapes, or a pair of shoes, now and then, by frightening some rich coward with a mock prosecution. Well! that is a task for which your studies under the sophists may have fitted you.

SPEUSIPPUS

You are wide of the mark.

CALLIDEMUS

Then what, in the name of Juno, is your scheme? Do you intend to join Orestes,[2] and rob on the highway? Take care; beware of the eleven;[3] beware of the hemlock. It may be very pleasant to live at other people's expense; but not very pleasant, I should think, to hear the pestle give its last bang against the mortar, when the cold dose is ready. Pah!—

SPEUSIPPUS

Hemlock—Orestes—folly! I aim at nobler objects. What say you to politics—the general assembly?

CALLIDEMUS

You an orator!—oh no! no! Cleon was worth

[1] Xenophon; *Convivium.*

[2] A celebrated highwayman of Attica. See Aristophanes; *Aves*, 711; and in several other passages.

[3] The police officers of Athens.

twenty such fools as you. You have succeeded, I grant, to his impudence, for which, if there be justice in Tartarus, he is now soaking up to the eyes in his own tan-pickle. But the Paphlagonian had parts.

SPEUSIPPUS

And you mean to imply—

CALLIDEMUS

Not I. You are a Pericles in embryo, doubtless. Well : and when are you to make your first speech ? oh Pallas !

SPEUSIPPUS

I thought of speaking, the other day, on the Sicilian expedition ; but Nicias [1] got up before me.

CALLIDEMUS

Nicias, poor honest man, might just as well have sat still ; his speaking did but little good. The loss of your oration is, doubtless, an irreparable public calamity.

SPEUSIPPUS

Why, not so ; I intend to introduce it at the next assembly ; it will suit any subject.

CALLIDEMUS

That is to say, it will suit none. But pray, if it be not too presumptuous a request, indulge me with a specimen.

[1] See Thucydides, vi., 8.

SPEUSIPPUS

Well; suppose the agora crowded; an important subject under discussion; an ambassador from Argos, or from the great King; the tributes from the islands; an impeachment; in short, anything you please. The crier makes proclamation—"Any citizen above fifty years old may speak—any citizen not disqualified may speak." Then I rise: a great murmur of curiosity while I am mounting the stand.

CALLIDEMUS

Of curiosity! yes, and of something else too. You will infallibly be dragged down by main force, like poor Glaucon [1] last year.

SPEUSIPPUS

Never fear. I shall begin in this style:

"When I consider, Athenians, the importance of our city; when I consider the extent of its power, the wisdom of its laws, the elegance of its decorations; when I consider by what names and by what exploits its annals are adorned; when I think on Harmodius and Aristogiton, on Themistocles and Miltiades, on Cimon and Pericles; when I contemplate our pre-eminence in arts and letters; when I observe so many flourishing states and islands compelled to own the dominion, and purchase the protection, of the City of the Violet Crown—" [2]

[1] See Xenophon; *Memorabilia*, iii.

[2] A favorite epithet of Athens. See Aristophanes; *Acharn.*, 637.

CALLIDEMUS

I shall choke with rage ! Oh, all ye gods and goddesses, what sacrilege, what perjury have I ever committed, that I should be singled out from among all the citizens of Athens to be the father of this fool ?

SPEUSIPPUS

What now ? By Bacchus, old man, I would not advise you to give way to such fits of passion in the streets! If Aristophanes were to see you, you would infallibly be in a comedy next spring.

CALLIDEMUS

You have more reason to fear Aristophanes than any fool living. Oh that he could but hear you trying to imitate the slang of Straton [1] and the lisp of Alcibiades! [2] You would be an inexhaustible subject. You would console him for the loss of Cleon.

SPEUSIPPUS

No, no. I may perhaps figure at the dramatic representations before long ; but in a very different way.

CALLIDEMUS

What do you mean ?

SPEUSIPPUS

What say you to a tragedy ?

CALLIDEMUS

A tragedy of yours ?

[1] See Aristophanes ; *Equites*, 1375.
[2] See Aristophanes ; *Vespæ*, 44.

SPEUSIPPUS

Even so.

CALLIDEMUS

O Hercules! O Bacchus! This is too much! Here is a universal genius; sophist—orator—poet. To what a three-headed monster have I given birth! a perfect Cerberus of intellect! And pray what may your piece be about? Or will your tragedy, like your speech, serve equally for any subject?

SPEUSIPPUS

I thought of several plots: Œdipus—Eteocles and Polynices—the war of Troy—the murder of Agamemnon.

CALLIDEMUS

And what have you chosen?

SPEUSIPPUS

You know there is a law which permits any modern poet to retouch a play of Æschylus, and bring it forward as his own composition. And, as there is an absurd prejudice, among the vulgar, in favor of his extravagant pieces, I have selected one of them and altered it.

CALLIDEMUS

Which of them?

SPEUSIPPUS

Oh that mass of barbarous absurdities, the Prometheus! But I have framed it anew upon the model

of Euripides. By Bacchus, I shall make Sophocles and Agathon look about them ! You would not know the play again.

CALLIDEMUS

By Jupiter, I believe not !

SPEUSIPPUS

I have omitted the whole of the absurd dialogue between Vulcan and Strength, at the beginning.

CALLIDEMUS

That may be, on the whole, an improvement. The play will then open with that grand soliloquy of Prometheus, when he is chained to the rock :

> " O ! ye eternal heavens ! Ye rushing winds !
> Ye fountains of great streams ! Ye ocean waves,
> That in ten thousand sparkling dimples wreathe
> Your azure smiles ! All-generating earth !
> All-seeing sun ! On you, on you, I call." [1]

Well, I allow that will be striking ; I did not think you capable of that idea. Why do you laugh ?

SPEUSIPPUS

Do you seriously suppose that one who has studied the plays of that great man, Euripides, would ever begin a tragedy in such a ranting style ?

CALLIDEMUS

What ! does not your play open with the speech of Prometheus ?

[1] See Æschylus ; *Prometheus*, 88.

SPEUSIPPUS

No doubt.

CALLIDEMUS

Then what, in the name of Bacchus, do you make him say?

SPEUSIPPUS

You shall hear; and, if it be not in the very style of Euripides, call me a fool.

CALLIDEMUS

That is a liberty which I shall venture to take, whether it be or no. But go on.

SPEUSIPPUS

Prometheus begins thus:

"Cœlus begat Saturn and Briareus,
Cottus and Creius and Iapetus,
Gyges and Hyperion, Phœbe, Tethys,
Thea and Rhea and Mnemosyne.
Then Saturn wedded Rhea, and begat
Pluto and Neptune, Jupiter and Juno."

CALLIDEMUS

Very beautiful, and very natural; and, as you say, very like Euripides.

SPEUSIPPUS

You are sneering. Really, father, you do not understand these things. You had not those advantages in your youth—

CALLIDEMUS

Which I have been fool enough to let you have. No ; in my early days lying had not been dignified into a science, nor politics degraded into a trade. I wrestled, and read Homer's battles, instead of dressing my hair, and reciting lectures in verse out of Euripides. But I have some notion of what a play should be ; I have seen Phrynichus, and lived with Æschylus. I saw the representation of the Persians.

SPEUSIPPUS

A wretched play ; it may amuse the fools who row the triremes ; but it is utterly unworthy to be read by any man of taste.

CALLIDEMUS

If you had seen it acted—the whole theatre frantic with joy, stamping, shouting, laughing, crying. There was Cynægeirus, the brother of Æschylus, who lost both his arms at Marathon, beating the stumps against his sides with rapture. When the crowd remarked him— But where are you going ?

SPEUSIPPUS

To sup with Alcibiades ; he sails with the expedition for Sicily in a few days ; this is his farewell entertainment.

CALLIDEMUS

So much the better; I should say, so much the worse. That cursed Sicilian expedition ! And you were one of the young fools[1] who stood clapping and shouting

[1] See Thucydides, vi., 13.

while he was gulling the rabble, and who drowned poor Nicias's voice with your uproar. Look to it; a day of reckoning will come. As to Alcibiades himself—

SPEUSIPPUS

What can you say against him? His enemies themselves acknowledge his merit.

CALLIDEMUS

They acknowledge that he is clever and handsome, and that he was crowned at the Olympic games. And what other merits do his friends claim for him? A precious assembly you will meet at his house, no doubt.

SPEUSIPPUS

The first men in Athens, probably.

CALLIDEMUS

Whom do you mean by the first men in Athens?

SPEUSIPPUS

Callicles.[1]

CALLIDEMUS

A sacrilegious, impious, unfeeling ruffian!

SPEUSIPPUS

Hippomachus.

CALLIDEMUS

A fool, who can talk of nothing but his travels

[1] Callicles plays a conspicuous part in the Gorgias of Plato.

through Persia and Egypt. Go, go. The Gods forbid that I should detain you from such choice society.

[*Exeunt severally.*

II

SCENE—*A Hall in the House of* ALCIBIADES

ALCIBIADES, SPEUSIPPUS, CALLICLES, HIPPOMACHUS, CHARICLEA, *and others, seated round a table, feasting.*

ALCIBIADES

Bring larger cups. This shall be our gayest revel. It is probably the last—for some of us at least.

SPEUSIPPUS

At all events, it will be long before you taste such wine again, Alcibiades.

CALLICLES

Nay, there is excellent wine in Sicily. When I was there with Eurymedon's squadron, I had many a long carouse. You never saw finer grapes than those of Ætna.

HIPPOMACHUS

The Greeks do not understand the art of making wine. Your Persian is the man. So rich, so fragrant, so sparkling. I will tell you what the Satrap of Caria said to me about that when I supped with him.

ALCIBIADES

Nay, sweet Hippomachus; not a word to-night about satraps, or the great King, or the walls of Babylon, or the Pyramids, or the mummies. Chariclea, why do you look so sad ?

CHARICLEA

Can I be cheerful when you are going to leave me, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES

My life, my sweet soul, it is but for a short time. In a year we conquer Sicily. In another, we humble Carthage.[1] I will bring back such robes, such necklaces, elephants' teeth by thousands, ay, and the elephants themselves, if you wish to see them. Nay, smile, my Chariclea, or I shall talk nonsense to no purpose.

HIPPOMACHUS

The largest elephant that I ever saw was in the grounds of Teribazus, near Susa. I wish that I had measured him.

ALCIBIADES

I wish that he had trod upon you. Come, come, Chariclea, we shall soon return, and then—

CHARICLEA

Yes; then, indeed.

ALCIBIADES

Yes, then—

Then for revels; then for dances,
Tender whispers, melting glances.
Peasants, pluck your richest fruits:
Minstrels, sound your sweetest flutes:
Come in laughing crowds to greet us,
Dark-eyed daughters of Miletus;
Bring the myrtles, bring the dice,
Floods of Chian, hills of spice.

[1] See Thucydides, vi., 90.

SPEUSIPPUS

Whose lines are those, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES

My own. Think you, because I do not shut myself up to meditate, and drink water, and eat herbs, that I cannot write verses? By Apollo, if I did not spend my days in politics and my nights in revelry, I should have made Sophocles tremble. But now I never go beyond a little song like this, and never invoke any Muse but Chariclea. But come, Speusippus, sing. You are a professed poet. Let us have some of your verses.

SPEUSIPPUS

My verses! How can you talk so? I a professed poet?

ALCIBIADES

Oh, content you, sweet Speusippus. We all know your designs upon the tragic honors. Come, sing. A chorus of your new play.

SPEUSIPPUS

Nay, nay—

HIPPOMACHUS

When a guest who is asked to sing at a Persian banquet refuses—

SPEUSIPPUS

In the name of Bacchus—

ALCIBIADES

I am absolute. Sing.

SPEUSIPPUS

Well, then, I will sing you a chorus, which, I think, is a tolerable imitation of Euripides.

CHARICLEA

Of Euripides?—Not a word!

ALCIBIADES

Why so, sweet Chariclea?

CHARICLEA

Would you have me betray my sex? Would you have me forget his Phædras and Sthenobœas? No: if I ever suffer any lines of that woman-hater, or his imitators, to be sung in my presence, may I sell herbs like his mother,[1] and wear rags like his Telephus.[2]

ALCIBIADES

Then, sweet Chariclea, since you have silenced Speusippus, you shall sing yourself.

CHARICLEA

What shall I sing?

ALCIBIADES

Nay, choose for yourself.

CHARICLEA

Then I will sing an old Ionian hymn which is chanted

[1] The mother of Euripides was an herb-woman. This was a favorite topic of Aristophanes.

[2] The hero of one of the lost plays of Euripides, who appears to have been brought upon the stage in the garb of a beggar. See Aristophanes; *Acharn.*, 430; and in other places.

every spring at the feast of Venus, near Miletus. I used to sing it in my own country when I was a child ; and— Ah, Alcibiades !

ALCIBIADES

Dear Chariclea, you shall sing something else. This distresses you.

CHARICLEA

No : hand me the lyre :—no matter. You will hear the song to disadvantage. But if it were sung as I have heard it sung ;—if this were a beautiful morning in spring, and if we were standing on a woody promontory, with the sea and the white sails, and the blue Cyclades beneath us—and the portico of a temple peeping through the trees on a huge peak above our heads —and thousands of people, with myrtles in their hands, thronging up the winding path, their gay dresses and garlands disappearing and emerging by turns as they passed round the angles of the rock—then perhaps—

ALCIBIADES

Now, by Venus herself, sweet lady, where you are we shall lack neither sun, nor flowers, nor spring, nor temple, nor goddess.

CHARICLEA. (*Sings*)

" Let this sunny hour be given,
Venus, unto love and mirth :
Smiles like thine are in the heaven ;
Bloom like thine is on the earth ;
And the tinkling of the fountains,
And the murmurs of the sea,
And the echoes from the mountains,
Speak of youth, and hope, and thee.

"By whate'er of soft expression
Thou hast taught to lovers' eyes,
Faint denial, slow confession,
Glowing cheeks, and stifled sighs;
By the pleasure and the pain,
By the follies and the wiles,
Pouting fondness, sweet disdain,
Happy tears and mournful smiles;

"Come with music floating o'er thee;
Come with violets springing round;
Let the Graces dance before thee,
All their golden zones unbound;
Now in sport their faces hiding,
Now with slender fingers fair,
From their laughing eyes dividing
The long curls of rose-crowned hair."

ALCIBIADES

Sweetly sung, but mournfully, Chariclea; for which I would chide you, but that I am sad myself. More wine, there! I wish to all the gods that I had fairly sailed from Athens.

CHARICLEA

And from me, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES

Yes, from you, dear lady. The days which immediately precede separation are the most melancholy of our lives.

CHARICLEA

Except those which immediately follow it.

ALCIBIADES

No; when I cease to see you, other objects may

compel my attention ; but can I be near you without thinking how lovely you are, and how soon I must leave you ?

HIPPOMACHUS

Ay ; travelling soon puts such thoughts out of men's heads.

CALLICLES

A battle is the best remedy for them.

CHARICLEA

A battle, I should think, might supply their place with others as unpleasant.

CALLICLES

No. The preparations are rather disagreeable to a novice. But as soon as the fighting begins, by Jupiter, it is a noble time ;—men trampling—shields clashing—spears breaking—and the pæan roaring louder than all.

CHARICLEA

But what if you are killed ?

CALLICLES

What, indeed ? You must ask Speusippus that question. He is a philosopher.

ALCIBIADES

Yes, and the greatest of philosophers, if he can answer it.

SPEUSIPPUS

Pythagoras is of opinion—

A Greek Ode.

HIPPOMACHUS

Pythagoras stole that and all his other opinions from Asia and Egypt. The transmigration of the soul and the vegetable diet are derived from India. I met a Brachman in Sogdiana—

CALLICLES

All nonsense!

CHARICLEA

What think you, Alcibiades?

ALCIBIADES

I think that if the doctrine be true, your spirit will be transfused into one of the doves who carry [1] ambrosia to the gods or verses to the mistresses of poets. Do you remember Anacreon's lines? How should you like such an office?

CHARICLEA

If I were to be your dove, Alcibiades, and you would treat me as Anacreon treated his, and let me nestle in your breast and drink from your cup, I would submit even to carry your love-letters to other ladies.

CALLICLES

What, in the name of Jupiter, is the use of all these speculations about death? Socrates [2] once lectured me upon it the best part of a day. I have hated the sight of him ever since. Such things may suit an old sophist

[1] Homer's *Odyssey*, xii., 63.

[2] See the close of Plato's *Gorgias*.

when he is fasting; but in the midst of wine and music—

HIPPOMACHUS

I differ from you. The enlightened Egyptians bring skeletons into their banquets, in order to remind their guests to make the most of their life while they have it.

CALLICLES

I want neither skeleton nor sophist to teach me that lesson. More wine, I pray you, and less wisdom. If you must believe something which you never can know, why not be contented with the long stories about the other world which are told us when we are initiated at the Eleusinian mysteries.[1]

CHARICLEA

And what are those stories?

ALCIBIADES

Are not you initiated, Chariclea?

CHARICLEA

No; my mother was a Lydian, a barbarian; and therefore—

ALCIBIADES

I understand. Now the curse of Venus on the fools

[1] The scene which follows is founded upon history. Thucydides tells us, in his sixth book, that about this time Alcibiades was suspected of having assisted at a mock celebration of these famous mysteries. It was the opinion of the vulgar among the Athenians that extraordinary privileges were granted in the other world to all who had been initiated.

who made so hateful a law! Speusippus, does not your friend Euripides [1] say—

"The land where thou art prosperous is thy country"?

Surely we ought to say to every lady,

"The land where thou art pretty is thy country."

Besides, to exclude foreign beauties from the chorus of the initiated in the Elysian fields is less cruel to them than to ourselves. Chariclea, you shall be initiated.

CHARICLEA

When?

ALCIBIADES

Now.

CHARICLEA

Where?

ALCIBIADES

Here.

CHARICLEA

Delightful!

SPEUSIPPUS

But there must be an interval of a year between the purification and the initiation.

ALCIBIADES

We will suppose all that.

[1] The right of Euripides to this line is somewhat disputable. See Aristophanes; *Plutus*, 1152.

SPEUSIPPUS

And nine days of rigid mortification of the senses.

ALCIBIADES

We will suppose that too. I am sure it was supposed, with as little reason, when I was initiated.

SPEUSIPPUS

But you are sworn to secrecy.

ALCIBIADES

You a sophist, and talk of oaths! You a pupil of Euripides, and forget his maxims!

"My lips have sworn it; but my mind is free."[1]

SPEUSIPPUS

But, Alcibiades—

ALCIBIADES

What! Are you afraid of Ceres and Proserpine?

SPEUSIPPUS

No; but—but—I—that is, I—but it is best to be safe—I mean— Suppose there should be something in it.

ALCIBIADES

Now, by Mercury, I shall die with laughing! Oh Speusippus, Speusippus!—Go back to your old father. Dig vineyards, and judge causes, and be a respectable citizen. But never, while you live, again dream of being a philosopher.

[1] See Euripides; *Hippolytus*, 608. For the jesuitical morality of this line Euripides is bitterly attacked by the comic poet.

SPEUSIPPUS

Nay, I was only—

ALCIBIADES

A pupil of Gorgias and Melesigenes afraid of Tartarus! In what region of the infernal world do you expect your domicile to be fixed? Shall you roll a stone, like Sisyphus? Hard exercise, Speusippus!

SPEUSIPPUS

In the name of all the gods—

ALCIBIADES

Or shall you sit starved and thirsty in the midst of fruit and wine, like Tantalus? Poor fellow! I think I see your face as you are springing up to the branches and missing your aim. O Bacchus! O Mercury!

SPEUSIPPUS

Alcibiades!

ALCIBIADES

Or perhaps you will be food for a vulture, like the huge fellow who was rude to Latona.

SPEUSIPPUS

Alcibiades!

ALCIBIADES

Never fear. Minos will not be so cruel. Your eloquence will triumph over all accusations. The furies will skulk away like disappointed sycophants. Only address the judges of hell in the speech which you were

prevented from speaking last assembly. "When I consider"—is not that the beginning of it? Come, man, do not be angry. Why do you pace up and down with such long steps? You are not in Tartarus yet. You seem to think that you are already stalking like poor Achilles,

"With stride
Majestic through the plain of Asphodel."[1]

SPEUSIPPUS

How can you talk so, when you know that I believe all that foolery as little as you do?

ALCIBIADES

Then march. You shall be the crier.[2] Callicles, you shall carry the torch. Why do you stare?

CALLICLES

I do not much like the frolic.

ALCIBIADES

Nay, surely you are not taken with a fit of piety. If all be true that is told of you, you have as little reason to think the gods vindictive as any man breathing. If you be not belied, a certain golden goblet which I have seen at your house was once in the Temple of Juno at Corcyra. And men say that there was a priestess at Tarentum—

CALLICLES

A fig for the gods! I was thinking about the

[1] See Homer's *Odyssey*, xi., 538.

[2] The crier and torch-bearer were important functionaries at the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries.

Archons. You will have an accusation laid against you to-morrow. It is not very pleasant to be tried before the King.[1]

ALCIBIADES

Never fear: there is not a sycophant in Attica who would dare to breathe a word against me, for the golden [2] plane-tree of the great King.

HIPPOMACHUS

That plane-tree—

ALCIBIADES

Never mind the plane-tree. Come, Callicles, you were not so timid when you plundered the merchantman off Cape Malea. Take up the torch and move. Hippomachus, tell one of the slaves to bring a sow.[3]

CALLICLES

And what part are you to play?

ALCIBIADES

I shall be hierophant. Herald, to your office. Torch-bearer, advance with the lights. Come forward, fair novice. We will celebrate the rite within.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] The name of King was given in the Athenian democracy to the magistrate who exercised those spiritual functions which in the monarchical times had belonged to the sovereign. His court took cognizance of offences against the religion of the State.

[2] See Herodotus, viii., 28.

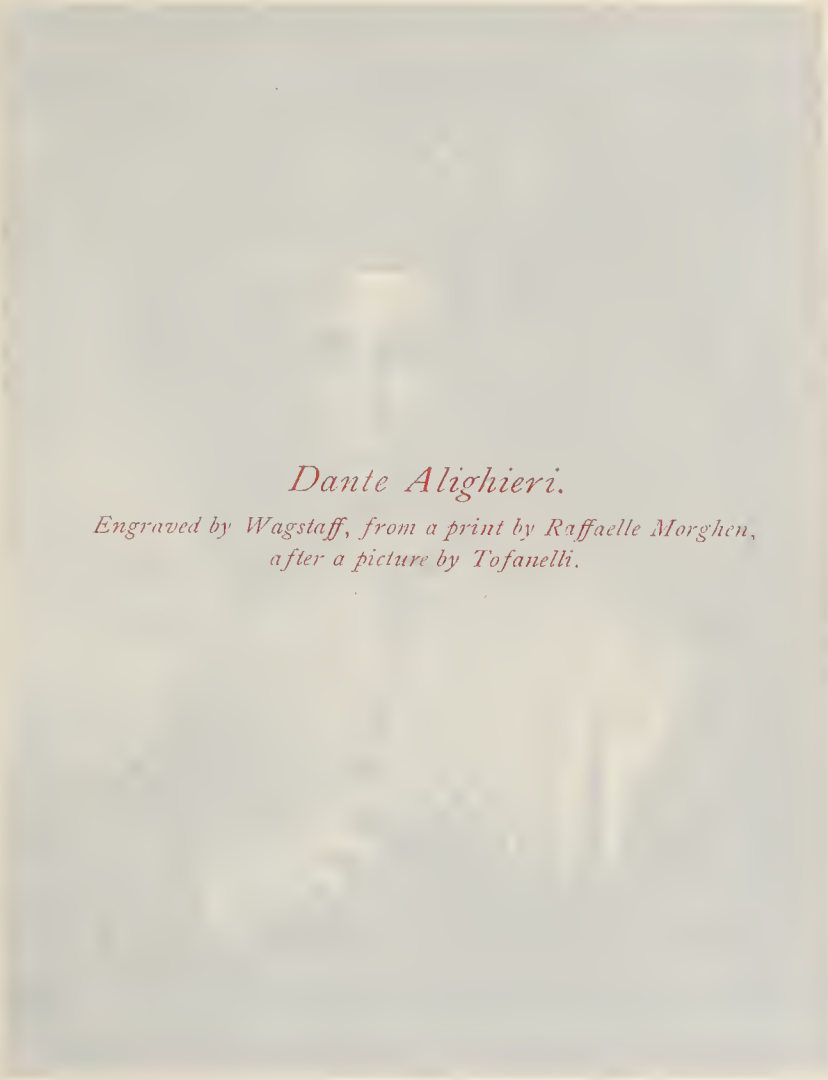
[3] A sow was sacrificed to Ceres at the admission to the greater mysteries.

CRITICISMS ON THE PRINCIPAL ITALIAN WRITERS

No. I. DANTE. (January, 1824)

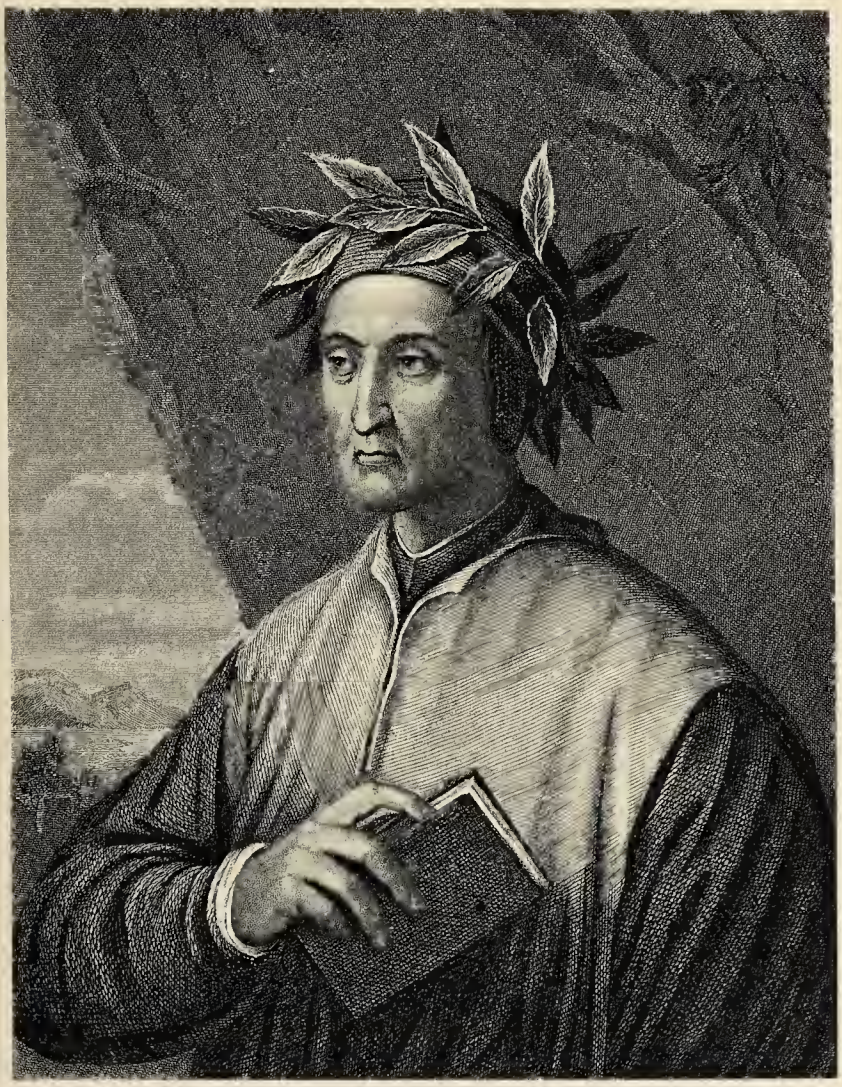
"Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circle."—Milton.

IN a review of Italian literature, Dante has a double claim to precedency. He was the earliest and the greatest writer of his country. He was the first man who fully descried and exhibited the powers of his native dialect. The Latin tongue, which, under the most favorable circumstances, and in the hands of the greatest masters, had still been poor, feeble, and singularly unpoetical, and which had, in the age of Dante, been debased by the admixture of innumerable barbarous words and idioms, was still cultivated with superstitious veneration, and received, in the last stage of corruption, more honors than it had deserved in the period of its life and vigor. It was the language of the Cabinet, of the University, of the Church. It was employed by all who aspired to distinction in the higher walks of poetry.



Dante Alighieri.

Engraved by Wagstaff, from a print by Raffaelle Morghen, after a picture by Tofanelli.



In compassion to the ignorance of his mistress, a cavalier might now and then proclaim his passion in Tuscan or Provençal rhymes. The vulgar might occasionally be edified by a pious allegory in the popular jargon. But no writer had conceived it possible that the dialect of peasants and market-women should possess sufficient energy and precision for a majestic and durable work. Dante adventured first. He detected the rich treasures of thought and diction which still lay latent in their ore. He refined them into purity. He burnished them into splendor. He fitted them for every purpose of use and magnificence. And he has thus acquired the glory, not only of producing the finest narrative poem of modern times, but also of creating a language, distinguished by unrivalled melody, and peculiarly capable of furnishing to lofty and passionate thoughts their appropriate garb of severe and concise expression.

To many this may appear a singular panegyric on the Italian tongue. Indeed, the great majority of the young gentlemen and young ladies, who, when they are asked whether they read Italian, answer "Yes," never go beyond the stories at the end of their grammar—The Pastor Fido, or an act of Artaserse. They could as soon read a Babylonian brick as a canto of Dante. Hence it is the general opinion, among those who know little or nothing of the subject, that this admirable language is adapted only to the effeminate cant of sonnetteers, musicians, and connoisseurs.

The fact is that Dante and Petrarch have been the Oromasdes and Arimanes of Italian literature. I wish not to detract from the merits of Petrarch. No one can doubt that his poems exhibit, amidst some imbecility and more affectation, much elegance, ingenuity, and

tenderness. They present us with a mixture which can only be compared to the whimsical concert described by the humorous poet of Modena :

> " S' udian gli usignuoli, al primo albore,
> E gli asini cantar versi d' amore." [1]

I am not, however, at present speaking of the intrinsic excellences of his writings, which I shall take another opportunity to examine, but of the effect which they produced on the literature of Italy. The florid and luxurious charms of his style enticed the poets and the public from the contemplation of nobler and sterner models. In truth, though a rude state of society is that in which great original works are most frequently produced, it is also that in which they are worst appreciated. This may appear paradoxical ; but it is proved by experience, and is consistent with reason. To be without any received canons of taste is good for the few who can create, but bad for the many who can only imitate and judge. Great and active minds cannot remain at rest. In a cultivated age they are too often contented to move on in the beaten path. But where no path exists they will make one. Thus the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Divine Comedy, appeared in dark and half barbarous times : and thus, of the few original works which have been produced in more polished ages, we owe a large proportion to men in low stations and of uninformed minds. I will instance, in our own language, the Pilgrim's Progress and Robinson Crusoe. Of all the prose works of fiction which we possess, these are, I will not say the best, but the most peculiar, the most unprecedented, the most in-

[1] Tassoni, *Secchia Rapita*, canto i., stanza 6.

imitable. Had Bunyan and Defoe been educated gentlemen, they would probably have published translations and imitations of French romances "by a person of quality." I am not sure that we should have had Lear if Shakspeare had been able to read Sophocles.

But these circumstances, while they foster genius, are unfavorable to the science of criticism. Men judge by comparison. They are unable to estimate the grandeur of an object when there is no standard by which they can measure it. One of the French philosophers (I beg Gerard's pardon), who accompanied Napoleon to Egypt, tells us that, when he first visited the great Pyramid, he was surprised to see it so diminutive. It stood alone in a boundless plain. There was nothing near it from which he could calculate its magnitude. But when the camp was pitched beside it, and the tents appeared like diminutive specks around its base, he then perceived the immensity of this mightiest work of man. In the same manner, it is not till a crowd of petty writers has sprung up that the merit of the great master-spirits of literature is understood.

We have, indeed, ample proof that Dante was highly admired in his own and the following age. I wish that we had equal proof that he was admired for his excellences. But it is a remarkable corroboration of what has been said, that this great man seems to have been utterly unable to appreciate himself. In his treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia* he talks with satisfaction of what he has done for Italian literature, of the purity and correctness of his style. "Cependant," says a favorite [1] writer of mine, "il n'est ni pur, ni correct, mais il est créateur." Considering the difficulties with

[1] Sismondi, *Littérature du Midi de l'Europe.*

which Dante had to struggle, we may, perhaps, be more inclined than the French critic to allow him this praise. Still, it is by no means his highest or most peculiar title to applause. It is scarcely necessary to say that those qualities which escaped the notice of the poet himself were not likely to attract the attention of the commentators. The fact is, that while the public homage was paid to some absurdities with which his works may be justly charged, and to many more which were falsely imputed to them—while lecturers were paid to expound and eulogize his physics, his metaphysics, his theology, all bad of their kind—while annotators labored to detect allegorical meanings of which the author never dreamed, the great powers of his imagination and the incomparable force of his style were neither admired nor imitated. Arimanes had prevailed. The Divine Comedy was to that age what St. Paul's Cathedral was to Omai. The poor Otaheitean stared listlessly for a moment at the huge cupola, and ran into a toy-shop to play with beads. Italy, too, was charmed with literary trinkets, and played with them for centuries.

From the time of Petrarch to the appearance of Alfieri's tragedies, we may trace in almost every page of Italian literature the influence of those celebrated sonnets which, from the nature both of their beauties and their faults, were peculiarly unfit to be models for general imitation. Almost all the poets of that period, however different in the degree and quality of their talents, are characterized by great exaggeration, and, as a necessary consequence, coldness of sentiment; by a passion for frivolous and tawdry ornament; and, above all, by an extreme feebleness and diffuseness

of style. Tasso, Marino, Guarini, Metastasio, and a crowd of writers of inferior merit and celebrity, were spell-bound in the enchanted gardens of a gaudy and meretricious Alcina, who concealed debility and deformity beneath the deceitful semblance of loveliness and health. Ariosto, the great Ariosto himself, like his own Ruggiero, stooped for a time to linger amidst the magic flowers and fountains, and to caress the gay and painted sorceress. But to him, as to his own Ruggiero, had been given the omnipotent ring and the winged courser, which bore him from the paradise of deception to the regions of light and nature.

The evil of which I speak was not confined to the graver poets. It infected satire, comedy, burlesque. No person can admire more than I do the great masterpieces of wit and humor which Italy has produced. Still, I cannot but discern and lament a great deficiency, which is common to them all. I find in them abundance of ingenuity, of droll naïveté, of profound and just reflection, of happy expression. Manners, characters, opinions, are treated with "a most learned spirit of human dealing." But something is still wanting. We read, and we admire, and we yawn. We look in vain for the bacchanalian fury which inspired the comedy of Athens, for the fierce and withering scorn which animates the invectives of Juvenal and Dryden, or even for the compact and pointed diction which adds zest to the verses of Pope and Boileau. There is no enthusiasm, no energy, no condensation, nothing which springs from strong feeling, nothing which tends to excite it. Many fine thoughts and fine expressions reward the toil of reading. Still it is a toil. The Secchia Rapita, in some points the best

poem of its kind, is painfully diffuse and languid. The Animali Parlanti of Casti is perfectly intolerable. I admire the dexterity of the plot, and the liberality of the opinions. I admit that it is impossible to turn to a page which does not contain something that deserves to be remembered ; but it is at least six times as long as it ought to be. And the garrulous feebleness of the style is a still greater fault than the length of the work.

It may be thought that I have gone too far in attributing these evils to the influence of the works and the fame of Petrarch. It cannot, however, be doubted that they have arisen, in a great measure, from the neglect of the style of Dante. This is not more proved by the decline of Italian poetry than by its resuscitation. After the lapse of four hundred and fifty years, there appeared a man capable of appreciating and imitating the father of Tuscan literature—Vittorio Alfieri. Like the prince in the nursery tale, he sought and found the Sleeping Beauty within the recesses which had so long concealed her from mankind. The portal was indeed rusted by time ; the dust of ages had accumulated on the hangings ; the furniture was of antique fashion; and the gorgeous color of the embroidery had faded. But the living charms which were well worth all the rest remained in the bloom of eternal youth, and well rewarded the bold adventurer who roused them from their long slumber. In every line of the Philip and the Saul—the greatest poems, I think, of the eighteenth century—we may trace the influence of that mighty genius which has immortalized the ill-starred love of Francesca and the paternal agonies of Ugolino. Alfieri bequeathed the sovereignty of Italian literature to the author of the Aristodemus—a man of

genius scarcely inferior to his own, and a still more devoted disciple of the great Florentine. It must be acknowledged that this eminent writer has sometimes pushed too far his idolatry of Dante. To borrow a sprightly illustration from Sir John Denham, he has not only imitated his garb, but borrowed his clothes. He often quotes his phrases ; and he has, not very judiciously, as it appears to me, imitated his versification. Nevertheless, he has displayed many of the higher excellences of his master ; and his works may justly inspire us with a hope that the Italian language will long flourish under a new literary dynasty, or rather under the legitimate line, which has at length been restored, to a throne long occupied by specious usurpers.

The man to whom the literature of his country owes its origin and its revival was born in times singularly adapted to call forth his extraordinary powers. Religious zeal, chivalrous love and honor, democratic liberty, are the three most powerful principles that have ever influenced the character of large masses of men. Each of them singly has often excited the greatest enthusiasm, and produced the most important changes. In the time of Dante all the three, often in amalgamation, generally in conflict, agitated the public mind. The preceding generation had witnessed the wrongs and the revenge of the brave, the accomplished, the unfortunate Emperor Frederic the Second —a poet in an age of schoolmen—a philosopher in an age of monks—a statesman in an age of crusaders. During the whole life of the poet, Italy was experiencing the consequences of the memorable struggle which he had maintained against the Church. The finest works of imagination have always been produced in

times of political convulsion, as the richest vineyards and the sweetest flowers always grow on the soil which has been fertilized by the fiery deluge of a volcano. To look no farther than the literary history of our own country, can we doubt that Shakspeare was in a great measure produced by the Reformation, and Wordsworth by the French Revolution? Poets often avoid political transactions; they often affect to despise them. But, whether they perceive it or not, they must be influenced by them. As long as their minds have any point of contact with those of their fellow-men, the electric impulse, at whatever distance it may originate, will be circuitously communicated to them.

This will be the case even in large societies, where the division of labor enables many speculative men to observe the face of nature, or to analyze their own minds at a distance from the seat of political transactions. In the little republic of which Dante was a member the state of things was very different. These small communities are most unmercifully abused by most of our modern professors of the science of government. In such states, they tell us, factions are always most violent: where both parties are cooped up within a narrow space, political difference necessarily produces personal malignity. Every man must be a soldier; every moment may produce a war. No citizen can lie down secure that he shall not be roused by the alarum-bell, to repel or avenge an injury. In such petty quarrels Greece squandered the blood which might have purchased for her the permanent empire of the world, and Italy wasted the energy and abilities which would have enabled her to defend her independence against the Pontiffs and the Cæsars.

All this is true: yet there is still a compensation. Mankind has not derived so much benefit from the empire of Rome as from the city of Athens, nor from the kingdom of France as from the city of Florence. The violence of party feeling may be an evil; but it calls forth that activity of mind which in some states of society it is desirable to produce at any expense. Universal soldiership may be an evil; but where every man is a soldier there will be no standing army. And is it no evil that one man in every fifty should be bred to the trade of slaughter; should live only by destroying and by exposing himself to be destroyed; should fight without enthusiasm and conquer without glory; be sent to a hospital when wounded, and rot on a dunghill when old? Such, over more than two thirds of Europe, is the fate of soldiers. It was something that the citizen of Milan or Florence fought, not merely in the vague and rhetorical sense in which the words are often used, but in sober truth, for his parents, his children, his lands, his house, his altars. It was something that he marched forth to battle beneath the Carroccio, which had been the object of his childish veneration; that his aged father looked down from the battlements on his exploits; that his friends and his rivals were the witnesses of his glory. If he fell, he was consigned to no venal or heedless guardians. The same day saw him conveyed within the walls which he had defended. His wounds were dressed by his mother; his confession was whispered to the friendly priest who had heard and absolved the follies of his youth; his last sigh was breathed upon the lips of the lady of his love. Surely there is no sword like that which is beaten out of a ploughshare. Surely this

state of things was not unmixedly bad ; its evils were alleviated by enthusiasm and by tenderness ; and it will, at least, be acknowledged that it was well fitted to nurse poetical genius in an imaginative and observant mind.

Nor did the religious spirit of the age tend less to this result than its political circumstances. Fanaticism is an evil, but it is not the greatest of evils. It is good that a people should be roused by any means from a state of utter torpor ; that their minds should be diverted from objects merely sensual to meditations, however erroneous, on the mysteries of the moral and intellectual world ; and from interests which are immediately selfish to those which relate to the past, the future, and the remote. These effects have sometimes been produced by the worst superstitions that ever existed ; but the Catholic religion, even in the time of its utmost extravagance and atrocity, never wholly lost the spirit of the Great Teacher, whose precepts form the noblest code, as his conduct furnished the purest example, of moral excellence. It is of all religions the most poetical. The ancient superstitions furnished the fancy with beautiful images, but took no hold on the heart. The doctrines of the Reformed Churches have most powerfully influenced the feelings and the conduct of men, but have not presented them with visions of sensible beauty and grandeur. The Roman Catholic Church has united to the awful doctrines of the one what Mr. Coleridge calls the "fair humanities" of the other. It has enriched sculpture and painting with the loveliest and most majestic forms. To the Phidian Jupiter it can oppose the Moses of Michael Angelo ; and to the voluptuous beauty of the

Queen of Cyprus the serene and pensive loveliness of the Virgin Mother. The legends of its martyrs and its saints may vie in ingenuity and interest with the mythological fables of Greece ; its ceremonies and processions were the delight of the vulgar ; the huge fabric of secular power with which it was connected attracted the admiration of the statesman. At the same time, it never lost sight of the most solemn and tremendous doctrines of Christianity—the incarnate God, the judgment, the retribution, the eternity of happiness or torment. Thus, while, like the ancient religions, it received incalculable support from policy and ceremony, it never wholly became, like those religions, a merely political and ceremonial institution.

The beginning of the thirteenth century was, as Machiavelli has remarked, the era of a great revival of this extraordinary system. The policy of Innocent, the growth of the Inquisition and the mendicant orders, the wars against the Albigenses, the Pagans of the East, and the unfortunate princes of the House of Swabia, agitated Italy during the two following generations. In this point Dante was completely under the influence of his age. He was a man of a turbid and melancholy spirit. In early youth he had entertained a strong and unfortunate passion, which, long after the death of her whom he loved, continued to haunt him. Dissipation, ambition, misfortunes had not effaced it. He was not only a sincere, but a passionate, believer. The crimes and abuses of the Church of Rome were indeed loathsome to him ; but to all its doctrines and all its rites he adhered with enthusiastic fondness and veneration ; and, at length, driven from his native country, reduced to a situation the most painful to a

man of his disposition, condemned to learn by experience that no food [1] is so bitter as the bread of dependence, and no ascent so painful as the staircase of a patron, his wounded spirit took refuge in visionary devotion. Beatrice, the unforgotten object of his early tenderness, was invested by his imagination with glorious and mysterious attributes; she was enthroned among the highest of the celestial hierarchy: Almighty Wisdom had assigned to her the care of the sinful and unhappy wanderer who had loved her with such a perfect love.[2] By a confusion like that which often takes place in dreams, he has sometimes lost sight of her human nature, and even of her personal existence, and seems to consider her as one of the attributes of the Deity.

But those religious hopes which had released the mind of the sublime enthusiast from the terrors of death had not rendered his speculations on human life more cheerful. This is an inconsistency which may often be observed in men of a similar temperament. He hoped for happiness beyond the grave, but he felt none on earth. It is from this cause, more than from any other, that his description of Heaven is so far inferior to the Hell or the Purgatory. With the passions and miseries of the suffering spirits he feels a strong sympathy. But among the beatified he appears as one who has nothing in common with them—as one who is incapable of comprehending, not only the degree but

[1] "Tu proverai si come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui, e come è duro calle
Lo scendere e 'l salir per l' altrui scale."
Paradiso, canto xvii.

[2] "L' amico mio, e non della ventura."—*Inferno*, canto ii.

the nature of their enjoyment. We think that we see him standing amidst those smiling and radiant spirits with that scowl of unutterable misery on his brow, and that curl of bitter disdain on his lips, which all his portraits have preserved, and which might furnish Chantrey with hints for the head of his projected Satan.

There is no poet whose intellectual and moral character are so closely connected. The great source, as it appears to me, of the power of the Divine Comedy is the strong belief with which the story seems to be told. In this respect, the only books which approach to its excellence are Gulliver's Travels and Robinson Crusoe. The solemnity of his asseverations, the consistency and minuteness of his details, the earnestness with which he labors to make the reader understand the exact shape and size of everything that he describes, give an air of reality to his wildest fictions. I should only weaken this statement by quoting instances of a feeling which pervades the whole work, and to which it owes much of its fascination. This is the real justification of the many passages in his poem which bad critics have condemned as grotesque. I am concerned to see that Mr. Cary, to whom Dante owes more than ever poet owed to translator, has sanctioned an accusation utterly unworthy of his abilities. "His solicitude," says that gentleman, "to define all his images in such a manner as to bring them within the circle of our vision, and to subject them to the power of the pencil, renders him little better than grotesque, where Milton has since taught us to expect sublimity." It is true that Dante has never shrunk from embodying his conceptions in determinate words, that he has even given measures and numbers, where Milton would have left

his images to float undefined in a gorgeous haze of language. Both were right. Milton did not profess to have been in heaven or hell. He might, therefore, reasonably confine himself to magnificent generalities.

Far different was the office of the lonely traveller, who had wandered through the nations of the dead. Had he described the abode of the rejected spirits in language resembling the splendid lines of the English poet; had he told us of

> "A universe of death, which God by curse
> Created evil, for evil only good,
> Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds
> Perverse all monstrous, all prodigious things,
> Abominable, unutterable, and worse
> Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
> Gorgons, and hydras, and chimæras dire,"

this would doubtless have been noble writing. But where would have been that strong impression of reality which, in accordance with his plan, it should have been his great object to produce? It was absolutely necessary for him to delineate accurately "all monstrous, all prodigious things"—to utter what might to others appear "unutterable"—to relate with the air of truth what fables had never feigned, to embody what fear had never conceived. And I will frankly confess that the vague sublimity of Milton affects me less than these reviled details of Dante. We read Milton; and we know that we are reading a great poet. When we read Dante, the poet vanishes. We are listening to the man who has returned from "the valley of the dolorous abyss;" [1] we seem to see the dilated eye of

[1] "La valle d' abisso doloroso."—*Inferno*, canto iv.

horror, to hear the shuddering accents with which he tells his fearful tale. Considered in this light, the narratives are exactly what they should be—definite in themselves, but suggesting to the mind ideas of awful and indefinite wonder. They are made up of the images of the earth ; they are told in the language of the earth ; yet the whole effect is, beyond expression, wild and unearthly. The fact is, that supernatural beings, as long as they are considered merely with reference to their own nature, excite our feelings very feebly. It is when the great gulf which separates them from us is passed, when we suspect some strange and undefinable relation between the laws of the visible and the invisible world, that they rouse, perhaps, the strongest emotions of which our nature is capable. How many children, and how many men, are afraid of ghosts, who are not afraid of God ! And this, because, though they entertain a much stronger conviction of the existence of a Deity than of the reality of apparitions, they have no apprehension that he will manifest himself to them in any sensible manner. While this is the case, to describe superhuman beings in the language, and to attribute to them the actions, of humanity may be grotesque, unphilosophical, inconsistent ; but it will be the only mode of working upon the feelings of men, and, therefore, the only mode suited for poetry. Shakspeare understood this well, as he understood everything that belonged to his art. Who does not sympathize with the rapture of Ariel, flying after the sunset on the wings of the bat, or sucking in the cups of flowers with the bee ? Who does not shudder at the caldron of Macbeth ? Where is the philosopher who is not moved when he thinks of the

strange connection between the infernal spirits and "the sow's blood that hath eaten her nine farrow?" But this difficult task of representing supernatural beings to our minds in a manner which shall be neither unintelligible to our intellects nor wholly inconsistent with our ideas of their nature, has never been so well performed as by Dante. I will refer to three instances, which are, perhaps, the most striking—the description of the transformations of the serpents and the robbers in the twenty-fifth canto of the Inferno; the passage concerning Nimrod in the thirty-first canto of the same part; and the magnificent procession in the twenty-ninth canto of the Purgatorio.

The metaphors and comparisons of Dante harmonize admirably with that air of strong reality of which I have spoken. They have a very peculiar character. He is perhaps the only poet whose writings would become much less intelligible if all illustrations of this sort were expunged. His similes are frequently rather those of a traveller than of a poet. He employs them not to display his ingenuity by fanciful analogies—not to delight the reader by affording him a distant and passing glimpse of beautiful images remote from the path in which he is proceeding—but to give an exact idea of the objects which he is describing, by comparing them with others generally known. The boiling pitch in Malebolge was like that in the Venetian arsenal; the mound on which he travelled along the banks of Phlegethon was like that between Ghent and Bruges, but not so large; the cavities where the Simoniacal prelates are confined resemble the fonts in the Church of John at Florence. Every reader of Dante will recall many other illustrations of this description,

which add to the appearance of sincerity and earnestness from which the narrative derives so much of its interest.

Many of his comparisons, again, are intended to give an exact idea of his feelings under particular circumstances. The delicate shades of grief, of fear, of anger, are rarely discriminated with sufficient accuracy in the language of the most refined nations. A rude dialect never abounds in nice distinctions of this kind. Dante, therefore, employs the most accurate and infinitely the most poetical mode of marking the precise state of his mind. Every person who has experienced the bewildering effect of sudden bad tidings—the stupefaction, the vague doubt of the truth of our own perceptions which they produce—will understand the following simile : " I was as he is who dreameth his own harm—who, dreaming, wishes that it may be all a dream, so that he desires that which is as though it were not." This is only one out of a hundred equally striking and expressive similitudes. The comparisons of Homer and Milton are magnificent digressions. It scarcely injures their effect to detach them from the work. Those of Dante are very different. They derive their beauty from the context, and reflect beauty upon it.

His embroidery cannot be taken out without spoiling the whole web. I cannot dismiss this part of the subject without advising every person who can muster sufficient Italian to read the simile of the sheep, in the third canto of the Purgatorio. I think it the most perfect passage of the kind in the world, the most imaginative, the most picturesque, and the most sweetly expressed.

No person can have attended to the Divine Comedy without observing how little impression the forms of

the external world appear to have made on the mind of Dante. His temper and his situation had led him to fix his observation almost exclusively on human nature. The exquisite opening of the eighth [1] canto of the Purgatorio affords a strong instance of this. He leaves to others the earth, the ocean, and the sky. His business is with man. To other writers, evening may be the season of dews and stars and radiant clouds. To Dante it is the hour of fond recollection and passionate devotion—the hour which melts the heart of the mariner and kindles the love of the pilgrim—the hour when the toll of the bell seems to mourn for another day which is gone and will return no more.

The feeling of the present age has taken a direction diametrically opposite. The magnificence of the physical world, and its influence upon the human mind, have been the favorite themes of our most eminent poets. The herd of blue-stocking ladies and sonneteering gentlemen seem to consider a strong sensibility to the "splendor of the grass, the glory of the flower," as an ingredient absolutely indispensable in the forma-

[1] I cannot help observing that Gray's imitation of that noble line,

"Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore,"

is one of the most striking instances of injudicious plagiarism with which I am acquainted. Dante did not put this strong personification at the beginning of his description. The imagination of the reader is so well prepared for it by the previous lines, that it appears perfectly natural and pathetic. Placed as Gray has placed it, neither preceded nor followed by anything that harmonizes with it, it becomes a frigid conceit. Woe to the unskilful rider who ventures on the horses of Achilles.

Οἱ δ' ἀλεγεινοὶ
Ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι δαμήμεναι ἠδ' ὀχέεσθαι,
Ἄλλῳ γ' ἢ Ἀχιλῆϊ τὸν ἀθανάτη τέκε μήτηρ.

tion of a poetical mind. They treat with contempt all writers who are unfortunately

> "Nec ponere lucum
> Artifices, nec rus saturum laudare."

The orthodox poetical creed is more Catholic. The noblest earthly object of the contemplation of man is man himself. The universe, and all its fair and glorious forms, are indeed included in the wide empire of the imagination ; but she has placed her home and her sanctuary amidst the inexhaustible varieties and the impenetrable mysteries of the mind.

> "In tutte parti impera, e quivi regge ;
> Quivi è la sua cittade, e l' alto seggio." [1]

Othello is perhaps the greatest work in the world. From what does it derive its power ? From the clouds ? From the ocean ? From the mountains ? Or from love strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave ? What is it that we go forth to see in Hamlet ? Is it a reed shaken with the wind ? A small celandine ? A bed of daffodils ? Or is it to contemplate a mighty and wayward mind laid bare before us to the inmost recesses ? It may, perhaps, be doubted whether the lakes and the hills are better fitted for the education of a poet than the dusky streets of a huge capital. Indeed, who is not tired to death with pure description of scenery ? Is it not the fact that external objects never strongly excite our feelings but when they are contemplated in reference to man, as illustrating his destiny, or as influencing his character ? The most beautiful object in the world, it will be allowed, is a

[1] *Inferno*, canto i.

beautiful woman. But who that can analyze his feelings is not sensible that she owes her fascination less to grace of outline and delicacy of color than to a thousand associations which, often unperceived by ourselves, connect those qualities with the source of our existence, with the nourishment of our infancy, with the passions of our youth, with the hopes of our age, with elegance, with vivacity, with tenderness, with the strongest of natural instincts, with the dearest of social ties?

To those who think thus, the insensibility of the Florentine poet to the beauties of nature will not appear an unpardonable deficiency. On mankind no writer, with the exception of Shakspeare, has looked with a more penetrating eye. I have said that his poetical character had derived a tinge from his peculiar temper. It is on the sterner and darker passions that he delights to dwell. All love, excepting the half mystic passion which he still felt for his buried Beatrice, had palled on the fierce and restless exile. The sad story of Rimini is almost a single exception. I know not whether it has been remarked that, in one point, misanthropy seems to have affected his mind as it did that of Swift. Nauseous and revolting images seem to have had a fascination for his mind; and he repeatedly places before his readers, with all the energy of his incomparable style, the most loathsome objects of the sewer and the dissecting-table.

There is another peculiarity in the poem of Dante which, I think, deserves notice. Ancient mythology has hardly ever been successfully interwoven with modern poetry. One class of writers have introduced the fabulous deities merely as allegorical representatives

of love, wine, or wisdom. This necessarily renders their works tame and cold. We may sometimes admire their ingenuity ; but with what interest can we read of beings of whose personal existence the writer does not suffer us to entertain, for a moment, even a conventional belief? Even Spenser's allegory is scarcely tolerable, till we contrive to forget that Una signifies innocence, and consider her merely as an oppressed lady under the protection of a generous knight.

Those writers who have, more judiciously, attempted to preserve the personality of the classical divinities have failed from a different cause. They have been imitators, and imitators at a disadvantage. Euripides and Catullus believed in Bacchus and Cybele as little as we do. But they lived among men who did. Their imaginations, if not their opinions, took the color of the age. Hence the glorious inspiration of the Bacchæ and the Atys. Our minds are formed by circumstances ; and I do not believe that it would be in the power of the greatest modern poet to lash himself up to a degree of enthusiasm adequate to the production of such works.

Dante alone, among the poets of later times, has been, in this respect, neither an allegorist nor an imitator ; and, consequently, he alone has introduced the ancient fictions with effect. His Minos, his Charon, his Pluto, are absolutely terrific. Nothing can be more beautiful or original than the use which he has made of the river of Lethe. He has never assigned to his mythological characters any functions inconsistent with the creed of the Catholic Church. He has related nothing concerning them which a good Christian of that age might not believe possible. On this account, there

is nothing in these passages that appears puerile or pedantic. On the contrary, this singular use of classical names suggests to the mind a vague and awful idea of some mysterious revelation, anterior to all recorded history, of which the dispersed fragments might have been retained amidst the impostures and superstitions of later religions. Indeed, the mythology of the Divine Comedy is of the elder and more colossal mould. It breates the spirit of Homer and Æschylus, not of Ovid and Claudian.

This is the more extraordinary, since Dante seems to have been utterly ignorant of the Greek language; and his favorite Latin models could only have served to mislead him. Indeed, it is impossible not to remark his admiration of writers far inferior to himself; and, in particular, his idolatry of Virgil, who, elegant and splendid as he is, has no pretensions to the depth and originality of mind which characterize his Tuscan worshipper. In truth, it may be laid down as an almost universal rule that good poets are bad critics. Their minds are under the tyranny of ten thousand associations imperceptible to others. The worst writer may easily happen to touch a spring which is connected in their minds with a long succession of beautiful images. They are like the gigantic slaves of Aladdin, gifted with matchless power, but bound by spells so mighty that when a child whom they could have crushed touched a talisman, of whose secret he was ignorant, they immediately became his vassals. It has more than once happened to me to see minds, graceful and majestic as the Titania of Shakspeare, bewitched by the charms of an ass's head, bestowing on it the fondest caresses, and crowning it with the sweetest flowers.

I need only mention the poems attributed to Ossian. They are utterly worthless, except as an edifying instance of the success of a story without evidence, and of a book without merit. They are a chaos of words which present no image, of images which have no archetype : they are without form and void ; and darkness is upon the face of them. Yet how many men of genius have panegyrized and imitated them !

The style of Dante is, if not his highest, perhaps his most peculiar excellence. I know nothing with which it can be compared. The noblest models of Greek composition must yield to it. His words are the fewest and the best which it is possible to use. The first expression in which he clothes his thoughts is always so energetic and comprehensive that amplification would only injure the effect. There is probably no writer in any language who has presented so many strong pictures to the mind ; yet there is probably no writer equally concise. This perfection of style is the principal merit of the Paradiso, which, as I have already remarked, is by no means equal in other respects to the two preceding parts of the poem. The force and felicity of the diction, however, irresistibly attract the reader through the theological lectures and the sketches of ecclesiastical biography with which this division of the work too much abounds. It may seem almost absurd to quote particular specimens of an excellence which is diffused over all his hundred cantos. I will, however, instance the third canto of the Inferno, and the sixth of the Purgatorio, as passages incomparable in their kind. The merit of the latter is, perhaps, rather oratorical than poetical ; nor can I recollect anything in the great Athenian speeches which equals it in force

of invective and bitterness of sarcasm. I have heard the most eloquent statesman of the age remark that, next to Demosthenes, Dante is the writer who ought to be most attentively studied by every man who desires to attain oratorical eminence.

But it is time to close this feeble and rambling critique. I cannot refrain, however, from saying a few words upon the translations of the Divine Comedy. Boyd's is as tedious and languid as the original is rapid and forcible. The strange measure which he has chosen, and, for aught I know, invented, is most unfit for such a work. Translations ought never to be written in a verse which requires much command of rhyme. The stanza becomes a bed of Procrustes ; and the thoughts of the unfortunate author are alternately racked and curtailed to fit their new receptacle. The abrupt and yet consecutive style of Dante suffers more than that of any other poet by a version diffuse in style, and divided into paragraphs, for they deserve no other name, of equal length.

Nothing can be said in favor of Hayley's attempt, but that it is better than Boyd's. His mind was a tolerable specimen of filigree work—rather elegant, and very feeble. All that can be said for his best works is that they are neat. All that can be said against his worst is that they are stupid. He might have translated Metastasio tolerably. But he was utterly unable to do justice to the

> "Rime e aspre e chiocce,
> Come si converrebbe al tristo buco." [1]

I turn with pleasure from these wretched perform-

[1] *Inferno*, canto xxxii.

ances to Mr. Cary's translation. It is a work which well deserves a separate discussion, and on which, if this article were not already too long, I could dwell with pleasure. At present I will only say that there is no other version in the world, so far as I know, so faithful, yet that there is no other version which so fully proves that the translator is himself a man of poetical genius. Those who are ignorant of the Italian language should read it to become acquainted with the Divine Comedy. Those who are most intimate with Italian literature should read it for its original merits : and I believe that they will find it difficult to determine whether the author deserves most praise for his intimacy with the language of Dante, or for his extraordinary mastery over his own.

No. II. PETRARCH. (April, 1824)

"Et vos, o lauri, carpam, et te, proxima myrte,
Sic positæ quoniam suaves miscetis odores."—Virgil.

IT would not be easy to name a writer whose celebrity, when both its extent and its duration are taken into the account, can be considered as equal to that of Petrarch. Four centuries and a half have elapsed since his death; yet still the inhabitants of every nation throughout the Western World are as familiar with his character and his adventures as with the most illustrious names, and the most recent anecdotes, of their own literary history. This is, indeed, a rare distinction. His detractors must acknowledge that it could not have been acquired by a poet destitute of merit. His admirers will scarcely maintain that the unassisted merit of Petrarch could have raised him to that eminence which has not yet been attained by Shakspeare, Milton, or Dante—that eminence of which perhaps no modern writer, excepting himself and Cervantes, has long retained possession—a European reputation.

It is not difficult to discover some of the causes to which this great man has owed a celebrity, which I cannot but think disproportioned to his real claims on the admiration of mankind. In the first place, he is an

Petrarch.

egotist. Egotism in conversation is universally abhorred. Lovers, and, I believe, lovers alone, pardon it to each other. No services, no talents, no powers of pleasing, render it endurable. Gratitude, admiration, interest, fear, scarcely prevent those who are condemned to listen to it from indicating their disgust and fatigue. The childish uncle, the powerful patron, can scarcely extort this compliance. We leave the inside of the mail in a storm, and mount the box, rather than hear the history of our companion. The chaplain bites his lips in the presence of the archbishop. The midshipman yawns at the table of the First Lord. Yet, from whatever cause, this practice, the pest of conversation, gives to writing a zest which nothing else can impart. Rousseau made the boldest experiment of this kind ; and it fully succeeded. In our own time Lord Byron, by a series of attempts of the same nature, made himself the object of general interest and admiration. Wordsworth wrote with egotism more intense, but less obvious ; and he has been rewarded with a sect of worshippers, comparatively small in number, but far more enthusiastic in their devotion. It is needless to multiply instances. Even now all the walks of literature are infested with mendicants of fame, who attempt to excite our interest by exhibiting all the distortions of their intellects, and stripping the covering from all the putrid sores of their feelings. Nor are there wanting many who push their imitation of the beggars whom they resemble a step farther, and who find it easier to extort a pittance from the spectator by simulating deformity and debility from which they are exempt, than by such honest labor as their health and strength enable them to perform. In the mean time the credulous public pities

and pampers a nuisance which requires only the treadmill and the whip. This art, often successful when employed by dunces, gives irresistible fascination to works which possess intrinsic merit. We are always desirous to know something of the character and situation of those whose writings we have perused with pleasure. The passages in which Milton has alluded to his own circumstances are perhaps read more frequently, and with more interest, than any other lines in his poems. It is amusing to observe with what labor critics have attempted to glean from the poems of Homer some hints as to his situation and feelings. According to one hypothesis, he intended to describe himself under the name of Demodocus. Others maintain that he was the identical Phemius whose life Ulysses spared. This propensity of the human mind explains, I think, in a great degree, the extensive popularity of a poet whose works are little else than the expression of his personal feelings.

In the second place, Petrarch was not only an egotist, but an amatory egotist. The hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, which he described, were derived from the passion which of all passions exerts the widest influence, and which of all passions borrows most from the imagination. He had also another immense advantage. He was the first eminent amatory poet who appeared after the great convulsion which had changed, not only the political, but the moral, state of the world. The Greeks, who, in their public institutions and their literary tastes, were diametrically opposed to the Oriental nations, bore a considerable resemblance to those nations in their domestic habits. Like them, they despised the intellects and immured the persons of their

women ; and it was among the least of the frightful evils to which this pernicious system gave birth, that all the accomplishments of mind, and all the fascinations of manner, which, in a highly-cultivated age, will generally be necessary to attach men to their female associates, were monopolized by the Phrynes and the Lamias. The indispensable ingredients of honorable and chivalrous love were nowhere to be found united. The matrons and their daughters, confined in the harem—insipid, uneducated, ignorant of all but the mechanical arts, scarcely seen till they were married—could rarely excite interest ; while their brilliant rivals —half graces, half harpies, elegant and informed, but fickle and rapacious—could never inspire respect.

The state of society in Rome was, in this point, far happier ; and the Latin literature partook of the superiority. The Roman poets have decidedly surpassed those of Greece in the delineation of the passion of love. There is no subject which they have treated with so much success. Ovid, Catullus, Tibullus, Horace, and Propertius, in spite of all their faults, must be allowed to rank high in this department of the art. To these I would add my favorite Plautus ; who, though he took his plots from Greece, found, I suspect, the originals of his enchanting female characters at Rome.

Still many evils remained ; and, in the decline of the great empire, all that was pernicious in its domestic institutions appeared more strongly. Under the influence of governments at once dependent and tyrannical, which purchased, by cringing to their enemies, the power of trampling on their subjects, the Romans sunk into the lowest state of effeminacy and debasement.

Falsehood, cowardice, sloth, conscious and unrepining degradation, formed the national character. Such a character is totally incompatible with the stronger passions. Love, in particular, which, in the modern sense of the word, implies protection and devotion on the one side, confidence on the other, respect and fidelity on both, could not exist among the sluggish and heartless slaves who cringed around the thrones of Honorius and Augustulus. At this period the great renovation commenced. The warriors of the North, destitute as they were of knowledge and humanity, brought with them, from their forests and marshes, those qualities without which humanity is a weakness, and knowledge a curse—energy, independence, the dread of shame, the contempt of danger. It would be most interesting to examine the manner in which the admixture of the savage conquerors and the effeminate slaves, after many generations of darkness and agitation, produced the modern European character ; to trace back from the first conflict to the final amalgamation, the operation of that mysterious alchemy which, from hostile and worthless elements, has extracted the pure gold of human nature ; to analyze the mass, and to determine the proportions in which the ingredients are mingled. But I will confine myself to the subject to which I have more particularly referred. The nature of the passion of love had undergone a complete change. It still retained, indeed, the fanciful and voluptuous character which it had possessed among the Southern nations of antiquity ; but it was tinged with the superstitious veneration with which the Northern warriors had been accustomed to regard women. Devotion and war had imparted to it their most solemn and animating feel-

ings. It was sanctified by the blessings of the Church, and decorated with the wreaths of the tournament. Venus, as in the ancient fable, was again rising above the dark and tempestuous waves which had so long covered her beauty. But she rose not now, as of old, in exposed and luxurious loveliness. She still wore the cestus of her ancient witchcraft ; but the diadem of Juno was on her brow, and the ægis of Pallas in her hand. Love might, in fact, be called a new passion ; and it is not astonishing that the first poet of eminence who wholly devoted his genius to this theme should have excited an extraordinary sensation. He may be compared to an adventurer who accidentally lands in a rich and unknown island ; and who, though he may only set up an ill-shaped cross upon the shore, acquires possession of its treasures, and gives it his name. The claim was indeed somewhat like that of Amerigo Vespucci to the continent which should have derived its appellation from Columbus. The Provençal poets were unquestionably the masters of the Florentine. But they wrote in an age which could not appreciate their merits ; and their imitator lived at the very period when composition in the vernacular language began to attract general attention. Petrarch was in literature what a Valentine is in love. The public preferred him, not because his merits were of a transcendent order, but because he was the first person whom they saw after they awoke from their long sleep.

Nor did Petrarch gain less by comparison with his immediate successors than with those who had preceded him. Till more than a century after his death Italy produced no poet who could be compared to him. This decay of genius is doubtless to be ascribed, in a great

measure, to the influence which his own works had exercised upon the literature of his country. Yet it has conduced much to his fame. Nothing is more favorable to the reputation of a writer than to be succeeded by a race inferior to himself; and it is an advantage, from obvious causes, much more frequently enjoyed by those who corrupt the national taste than by those who improve it.

Another cause has co-operated with those which I have mentioned to spread the renown of Petrarch. I mean the interest which is inspired by the events of his life—an interest which must have been strongly felt by his contemporaries, since, after an interval of five hundred years, no critic, can be wholly exempt from its influence. Among the great men to whom we owe the resuscitation of science he deserves the foremost place; and his enthusiastic attachment to this great cause constitutes his most just and splendid title to the gratitude of posterity. He was the votary of literature. He loved it with a perfect love. He worshipped it with an almost fanatical devotion. He was the missionary, who proclaimed its discoveries to distant countries—the pilgrim, who travelled far and wide to collect its relics—the hermit, who retired to seclusion to meditate on its beauties—the champion, who fought its battles—the conqueror, who, in more than a metaphorical sense, led barbarism and ignorance in triumph, and received in the capitol the laurel which his magnificent victory had earned.

Nothing can be conceived more noble or affecting than that ceremony. The superb palaces and porticoes, by which had rolled the ivory chariots of Marius and Cæsar, had long mouldered into dust. The laurelled

fasces—the golden eagles—the shouting legions—the captives and the pictured cities—were indeed wanting to his victorious procession. The sceptre had passed away from Rome ; but she still retained the mightier influence of an intellectual empire, and was now to confer the prouder reward of an intellectual triumph. To the man who had extended the dominion of her ancient language—who had erected the trophies of philosophy and imagination in the haunts of ignorance and ferocity—whose captives were the hearts of admiring nations enchained by the influence of his song —whose spoils were the treasures of ancient genius rescued from obscurity and decay—the Eternal City offered the just and glorious tribute of her gratitude. Amidst the ruined monuments of ancient and the infant erections of modern art, he who had restored the broken link between the two ages of human civilization was crowned with the wreath which he had deserved from the moderns, who owed to him their refinement—from the ancients, who owed to him their fame. Never was a coronation so august witnessed by Westminster or by Rheims.

When we turn from this glorious spectacle to the private chamber of the poet ; when we contemplate the struggle of passion and virtue—the eye dimmed, the cheek furrowed, by the tears of sinful and hopeless desire ; when we reflect on the whole history of his attachment, from the gay fantasy of his youth to the lingering despair of his age, pity and affection mingle with our admiration. Even after death had placed the last seal on his misery, we see him devoting to the cause of the human mind all the strength and energy which love and sorrow had spared. He lived the

apostle of literature—he fell its martyr : he was found dead with his head reclined on a book.

Those who have studied the life and writings of Petrarch with attention will perhaps be inclined to make some deductions from this panegyric. It cannot be denied that his merits were disfigured by a most unpleasant affectation. His zeal for literature communicated a tinge of pedantry to all his feelings and opinions. His love was the love of a sonnetteer ; his patriotism was the patriotism of an antiquarian. The interest with which we contemplate the works, and study the history, of those who in former ages have occupied our country, arises from the associations which connect them with the community in which are comprised all the objects of our affection and our hope. In the mind of Petrarch these feelings were reversed. He loved Italy, because it abounded with the monuments of the ancient masters of the world. His native city—the fair and glorious Florence—the modern Athens, then in all the bloom and strength of its youth—could not obtain, from the most distinguished of its citizens, any portion of that passionate homage which he paid to the decrepitude of Rome. These and many other blemishes, though they must in candor be acknowledged, can but in a very slight degree diminish the glory of his career. For my own part, I look upon it with so much fondness and pleasure that I feel reluctant to turn from it to the consideration of his works, which I by no means contemplate with equal admiration.

Nevertheless, I think highly of the poetical powers of Petrarch. He did not possess, indeed, the art of strongly presenting sensible objects to the imagination ; and this is the more remarkable, because the talent of

which I speak is that which peculiarly distinguishes the Italian poets. In the Divine Comedy it is displayed in its highest perfection. It characterizes almost every celebrated poem in the language. Perhaps this is to be attributed to the circumstance that painting and sculpture had attained a high degree of excellency in Italy before poetry had been extensively cultivated. Men were debarred from books, but accustomed from childhood to contemplate the admirable works of art which, even in the thirteenth century, Italy began to produce. Hence their imaginations received so strong a bias that, even in their writings, a taste for graphic delineation is discernible. The progress of things in England has been in all respects different. The consequence is, that English historical pictures are poems on canvas, while Italian poems are pictures painted to the mind by means of words. Of this national characteristic the writings of Petrarch are almost totally destitute. His sonnets, indeed, from their subject and nature, and his Latin poems, from the restrains which always shackle one who writes in a dead language, cannot fairly be received in evidence. But his Triumphs absolutely required the exercise of this talent, and exhibit no indications of it.

Genius, however, he certainly possessed, and genius of a high order. His ardent, tender, and magnificent turn of thought, his brilliant fancy, his command of expression, at once forcible and elegant, must be acknowledged. Nature meant him for the prince of lyric writers. But by one fatal present she deprived her other gifts of half their value. He would have been a much greater poet had he been a less clever man. His ingenuity was the bane of his mind. He abandoned

the noble and natural style, in which he might have excelled, for the conceits which he produced with a facility at once admirable and disgusting. His muse, like the Roman lady in Livy, was tempted by gaudy ornaments to betray the fastnesses of her strength, and, like her, was crushed beneath the glittering bribes which had seduced her.

The paucity of his thoughts is very remarkable. It is impossible to look without amazement on a mind so fertile in combinations, yet so barren of images. His amatory poetry is wholly made up of a very few topics, disposed in so many orders, and exhibited in so many lights, that it reminds us of those arithmetical problems about permutations which so much astonish the unlearned. The French cook, who boasted that he could make fifteen different dishes out of a nettletop, was not a greater master of his art. The mind of Petrarch was a kaleidoscope. At every turn it presents us with new forms, always fantastic, occasionally beautiful ; and we can scarcely believe that all these varieties have been produced by the same worthless fragments of glass. The sameness of his images is, indeed, in some degree to be attributed to the sameness of his subject. It would be unreasonable to expect perpetual variety from so many hundred compositions, all of the same length, all in the same measure, and all addressed to the same insipid and heartless coquette. I cannot but suspect, also, that the perverted taste, which is the blemish of his amatory verses, was to be attributed to the influence of Laura, who, probably, like most critics of her sex, preferred a gaudy to a majestic style. Be this as it may, he no sooner changes his subject than he changes his manner. When he speaks of the wrongs and degrad-

ation of Italy, devastated by foreign invaders, and but feebly defended by her pusillanimous children, the effeminate lips of the sonnetteer is exchanged for a cry, wild, and solemn, and piercing as that which proclaimed "Sleep no more" to the bloody House of Cawdor. "Italy seems not to feel her sufferings," exclaims her impassioned poet; "decrepit, sluggish, and languid, will she sleep forever? Will three be none to awake her? Oh that I had my hands twisted in her hair!" [1]

Nor is it with less energy that he denounces against the Mahometan Babylon the vengeance of Europe and of Christ. His magnificent enumeration of the ancient exploits of the Greeks must always excite admiration, and cannot be perused without the deepest interest, at a time when the wise and good, bitterly disappointed in so many other countries, are looking with breathless anxiety towards the natal land of liberty—the field of Marathon—and the deadly pass where the Lion of Lacedæmon turned to bay.[2]

His poems on religious subjects also deserve the highest commendation. At the head of these must be placed the Ode to the Virgin. It is, perhaps, the finest hymn in the world. His devout veneration receives an exquisitely poetical character from the delicate perception of the sex and the loveliness of his idol, which we may easily trace throughout the whole composition.

I could dwell with pleasure on these and similar parts

[1] "Che suoi guai non par che senta;
Vecchia, oziosa, e lenta.
Dormirà sempre, e non fia chi la svegli?
Le man l' avess' io avvolte entro e capegli.—Canzone xi.

[2] "Maratona, e le mortali strette
Che difese il Leon con poco gente."—Canzone v.

of the writings of Petrarch ; but I must return to his amatory poetry: to that he intrusted his fame ; and to that he has principally owed it.

The prevailing defect of his best compositions on this subject is the universal brilliancy with which they are lighted up. The natural language of the passions is, indeed, often figurative and fantastic ; and with none is this more the case than with that of love. Still, there is a limit. The feelings should, indeed, have their ornamental garb ; but, like an elegant woman, they should be neither muffled nor exposed. The drapery should be so arranged as at once to answer the purposes of modest concealment and judicious display. The decorations should sometimes be employed to hide a defect, and sometimes to heighten a beauty ; but never to conceal, much less to distort, the charms to which they are subsidiary. The love of Petrarch, on the contrary, arrays itself like a foppish savage, whose nose is bored with a golden ring, whose skin is painted with grotesque forms and dazzling colors, and whose ears are drawn down his shoulders by the weight of jewels. It is a rule, without any exception, in all kinds of composition, that the principal idea, the predominant feeling, should never be confounded with the accompanying decorations. It should generally be distinguished from them by greater simplicity of expression ; as we recognize Napoleon in the pictures of his battles, amidst a crowd of embroidered coats and plumes, by his gray cloak and his hat without a feather. In the verses of Petrarch it is generally impossible to say what thought is meant to be predominant. All is equally elaborate. The chief wears the same gorgeous and degrading livery with his retinue,

and obtains only his share of the indifferent stare which we bestow upon them in common. The poems have no strong lights and shades, no background, no foreground ;—they are like the illuminated figures in an Oriental manuscript—plenty of rich tints and no perspective. Such are the faults of the most celebrated of these compositions. Of those which are universally acknowledged to be bad it is scarcely possible to speak with patience. Yet they have much in common with their splendid companions. They differ from them, as a May-day procession of chimney-sweepers differs from the Field of Cloth of Gold. They have the gaudiness but not the wealth. His muse belongs to that numerous class of females who have no objection to be dirty, while they can be tawdry. When his brilliant conceits are exhausted, he supplies their place with metaphysical quibbles, forced antitheses, bad puns, and execrable charades. In his fifth sonnet he may, I think, be said to have sounded the lowest chasm of the Bathos. Upon the whole, that piece may be safely pronounced to be the worst attempt at poetry, and the worst attempt at wit, in the world.

A strong proof of the truth of these criticisms is, that almost all the sonnets produce exactly the same effect on the mind of the reader. They relate to all the various moods of a lover, from joy to despair ; yet they are perused, as far as my experience and observation have gone, with exactly the same feeling. The fact is, that in none of them are the passion and the ingenuity mixed in just proportions. There is not enough sentiment to dilute the condiments which are employed to season it. The repast which he sets before us resembles the Spanish entertainment in Dryden's *Mock As-*

trologer, at which the relish of all the dishes and sauces was overpowered by the common flavor of spice. Fish, flesh, fowl, everything at table tasted of nothing but red pepper.

The writings of Petrarch may, indeed, suffer undeservedly from one cause to which I must allude. His imitators have so much familiarized the ear of Italy and of Europe to the favorite topics of amorous flattery and lamentation, that we can scarcely think them original when we find them in the first author ; and, even when our understandings have convinced us that they were new to him, they are still old to us. This has been the fate of many of the finest passages of the most eminent writers. It is melancholy to trace a noble thought from stage to stage of its profanation ; to see it transferred from the first illustrious wearer to his lackeys, turned, and turned again, and at last hung on a scare-crow. Petrarch has really suffered much from this cause. Yet that he should have so suffered is a sufficient proof that his excellences were not of the highest order. A line may be stolen, but the pervading spirit of a great poet is not to be surreptitiously obtained by a plagiarist. The continued imitation of twenty-five centuries has left Homer as it found him. If every simile and every turn of Dante had been copied ten thousand times, the Divine Comedy would have retained all its freshness. It was easy for the porter in Farquhar to pass for Beau Clincher, by borrowing his lace and his pulvilio. It would have been more difficult to enact Sir Harry Wildair.

Before I quit this subject, I must defend Petrarch from one accusation which is in the present day frequently brought against him. His sonnets are pro-

nounced by a large sect of critics not to possess certain qualities which they maintain to be indispensable to sonnets, with as much confidence, and as much reason, as their prototypes of old insisted on the unities of the drama. I am an exoteric—utterly unable to explain the mysteries of this new poetical faith. I only know that it is a faith, which except a man do keep pure and undefiled, without doubt he shall be called a blockhead. I cannot, however, refrain from asking what is the particular virtue which belongs to fourteen as distinguished from all other numbers. Does it arise from its being a multiple of seven? Has this principle any reference to the sabbatical ordinance? Or is it to the order of rhymes that these singular properties are attached? Unhappily, the sonnets of Shakspeare differ as much in this respect from those of Petrarch, as from a Spenserian or an octave stanza. Away with this unmeaning jargon! We have pulled down the old regime of criticism. I trust that we shall never tolerate the equally pedantic and irrational despotism which some of the revolutionary leaders would erect upon its ruins. We have not dethroned Aristotle and Bossu for this.

These sonnet-fanciers would do well to reflect that, though the style of Petrarch may not suit the standard of perfection which they have chosen, they lie under great obligations to these very poems; that, but for Petrarch, the measure, concerning which they legislate so judiciously, would probably never have attracted notice; and that to him they owe the pleasure of admiring, and the glory of composing, pieces, which seem to have been produced by Master Slender, with the assistance of his man Simple.

I cannot conclude these remarks without making a

few observations on the Latin writings of Petrarch. It appears that, both for himself and by his contemporaries, these were far more highly valued than his compositions in the vernacular language. Posterity, the supreme court of literary appeal, has not only reversed the judgment, but, according to its general practice, reversed it with costs, and condemned the unfortuuate works to pay, not only for their own inferiority, but also for the injustice of those who had given them an unmerited preference. And it must be owned that, without making large allowances for the circumstances under which they were produced, we cannot pronounce a very favorable judgment. They must be considered as exotics, transplanted to a foreign climate, and reared in an unfavorable situation ; and it would be unreasonable to expect from them the health and the vigor which we find in the indigenous plants around them, or which they might themselves have possessed in their native soil. He has but very imperfectly imitated the style of the Latin authors, and has not compensated for the deficiency by enriching the ancient language with the graces of modern poetry. The splendor and ingenuity, which we admire even when we condemn it, in his Italian works, is almost totally wanting, and only illuminates with rare and occasional glimpses the dreary obscurity of the Africa. The eclogues have more animation ; but they can only be called poems by courtesy. They have nothing in common with his writings in his native language, except the eternal pun about Laura and Daphne. None of these works would have placed him on a level with Vida or Buchanan. Yet when we compare him with those who preceded him, when we consider that he went on the forlorn-

hope of literature, that he was the first who perceived, and the first who attempted to revive, the finer elegances of the ancient language of the world, we shall perhaps think more highly of him than of those who could never have surpassed his beauties if they had not inherited them.

He has aspired to emulate the philosophical eloquence of Cicero, as well as the poetical majesty of Virgil. His essay on the Remedies of Good and Evil Fortune is a singular work in a colloquial form, and a most scholastic style. It seems to be framed upon the model of the Tusculan Questions—with what success those who have read it may easily determine. It consists of a series of dialogues : in each of these a person is introduced who has experienced some happy or some adverse event : he gravely states his case ; and a reasoner, or rather Reason personified, confutes him ; a task not very difficult, since the disciple defends his position only by pertinaciously repeating it, in almost the same words, at the end of every argument of his antagonist. In this manner Petrarch solves an immense variety of cases. Indeed, I doubt whether it would be possible to name any pleasure or any calamity which does not find a place in this dissertation. He gives excellent advice to a man who is in expectation of discovering the philosopher's stone ; to another, who has formed a fine aviary; to a third, who is delighted with the tricks of a favorite monkey. His lectures to the unfortunate are equally singular. He seems to imagine that a precedent in point is a sufficient consolation for every form of suffering. "Our town is taken," says one complainant. "So was Troy," replies his comforter.—"My wife has eloped," says another. "If it has hap-

pened to you once, it happened to Menelaus twice." One poor fellow is in great distress at having discovered that his wife's son is none of his. "It is hard," says he, "that I should have had the expense of bringing up one who is indifferent to me." "You are a man," returns his monitor, quoting the famous line of Terence; "and nothing that belongs to any other man ought to be indifferent to you." The physical calamities of life are not omitted; and there is, in particular, a disquisition on the advantages of having the itch, which, if not convincing, is certainly very amusing.

The invectives on an unfortunate physician, or rather upon the medical science, have more spirit. Petrarch was thoroughly in earnest on this subject. And the bitterness of his feelings occasionally produces, in the midst of his classical and scholastic pedantry, a sentence worthy of the second Philippic. Swift himself might have envied the chapter on the causes of the paleness of physicians.

Of his Latin works the Epistles are the most generally known and admired. As compositions they are certainly superior to his essays. But their excellence is only comparative. From so large a collection of letters, written by so eminent a man, during so varied and eventful a life, we should have expected a complete and spirited view of the literature, the manners, and the politics of the age. A traveller—a poet—a scholar—a lover—a courtier—a recluse—he might have perpetuated, in an imperishable record, the form and pressure of the age and body of the time. Those who read his correspondence, in the hope of finding such information as this, will be utterly disappointed. It contains nothing characteristic of the period or of

the individual. It is a series, not of letters, but of themes ; and, as it is not generally known, might be very safely employed at public schools as a magazine of commonplaces. Whether he write on politics to the Emperor and the Doge, or send advice and consolation to a private friend, every line is crowded with examples and quotations, and sounds big with Anaxagoras and Scipio. Such was the interest excited by the character of Petrarch, and such the admiration which was felt for his epistolary style, that it was with difficulty that his letters reached the place of their destination. The poet describes, with pretended regret and real complacency, the importunity of the curious, who often opened and sometimes stole, these favorite compositions. It is a remarkable fact that, of all his epistles, the least affected are those which are addressed to the dead and the unborn. Nothing can be more absurd than his whim of composing grave letters of expostulation and commendation to Cicero and Seneca ; yet these strange performances are written in a far more natural manner than his communications to his living correspondents. But of all his Latin works, the preference must be given to the Epistle to Posterity ; a simple, noble, and pathetic composition, most honorable both to his taste and his heart. If we can make allowance for some of the affected humility of an author, we shall perhaps think that no literary man has left a more pleasing memorial of himself.

In conclusion, we may pronounce that the works of Petrarch were below both his genius and his celebrity; and that the circumstances under which he wrote were as adverse to the development of his powers as they were favorable to the extension of his fame.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT LAWSUIT

BETWEEN THE PARISHES OF

ST. DENNIS AND ST. GEORGE IN THE WATER. (April, 1824)

THE parish of St. Dennis is one of the most pleasant parts of the county in which it is situated. It is fertile, well wooded, well watered, and of an excellent air. For many generations the manor had been holden in tail-male by a worshipful family, who have always taken precedence of their neighbors at the races and the sessions.

In ancient times the affairs of this parish were administered by a court-baron, in which the freeholders were judges ; and the rates were levied by select vestries of the inhabitant householders. But at length these good customs fell into disuse. The Lords of the Manor, indeed, still held courts for form's sake ; but they or their stewards had the whole management of affairs. They demanded services, duties, and customs to which they had no just title. Nay, they would often bring actions against their neighbors for their own private advantage, and then send in the bill to the parish. No objection was made, during many years, to these proceedings, so that the rates became heavier

and heavier ; nor was any person exempted from these demands, except the footmen and game-keepers of the squire, and the rector of the parish. They, indeed, were never checked in any excess. They would come to an honest laborer's cottage, eat his pancakes, tuck his fowls into their pockets, and cane the poor man himself. If he went up to the great house to complain, it was hard to get the speech of Sir Lewis ; and, indeed, his only chance of being righted was to coax the squire's pretty house-keeper, who could do what she pleased with her master. If he ventured to intrude upon the Lord of the Manor without this precaution, he gained nothing by his pains. Sir Lewis, indeed, would at first receive him with a civil face ; for, to give him his due, he could be a fine gentleman when he pleased. "Good-day, my friend," he would say ; "what situation have you in my family?" "Bless your honor," says the poor fellow, "I am not one of your honor's servants ; I rent a small piece of ground, your honor." "Then, you dog," quoth the squire, "what do you mean by coming here? Has a gentleman nothing to do but to hear the complaints of clowns? Here! Philip, James, Dick, toss this fellow in a blanket ; or duck him, and set him in the stocks to dry."

One of these precious Lords of the Manor enclosed a deer-park ; and, in order to stock it, he seized all the pretty pet fawns that his tenants had brought up, without paying them a farthing, or asking their leave. It was a sad day for the parish of St. Dennis. Indeed, I do not believe that all his oppressive exactions and long bills enraged the poor tenants as much as this cruel measure.

Yet, for a long time, in spite of all these inconveniences, St. Dennis's was a very pleasant place. The people could not refrain from capering if they heard the sound of a fiddle. And if they were inclined to be riotous, Sir Lewis had only to send for Punch, or the dancing dogs, and all was quiet again. But this could not last forever; they began to think more and more of their condition; and at last a club of foul-mouthed, good-for-nothing rascals was held at the sign of the Devil, for the purpose of abusing the squire and the parson. The doctor, to own the truth, was old and indolent, extremely fat and greedy. He had not preached a tolerable sermon for a long time. The squire was still worse: so that, partly by truth and partly by falsehood, the club set the whole parish against their superiors. The boys scrawled caricatures of the clergyman upon the church-door, and shot at the landlord with pop-guns as he rode a-hunting. It was even whispered about that the Lord of the Manor had no right to his estate, and that if he were compelled to produce the original title-deeds, it would be found that he only held the estate in trust for the inhabitants of the parish.

In the mean time the squire was pressed more and more for money. The parish could pay no more. The rector refused to lend a farthing. The Jews were clamorous for their money; and the landlord had no other resource than to call together the inhabitants of the parish, and to request their assistance. They now attacked him furiously about their grievances, and insisted that he should relinquish his oppressive powers. They insisted that his footmen should be kept in order, that the parson should pay his share of the rates, that

the children of the parish should be allowed to fish in the trout-stream, and to gather blackberries in the hedges. They at last went so far as to demand that he should acknowledge that he held his estate only in trust for them. His distress compelled him to submit. They, in turn, agreed to set him free from his pecuniary difficulties, and to suffer him to inhabit the manor-house ; and only annoyed him from time to time by singing impudent ballads under his window.

The neighboring gentlefolks did not look on these proceedings with much complacency. It is true that Sir Lewis and his ancestors had plagued them with lawsuits, and affronted them at county meetings. Still, they preferred the insolence of a gentleman to that of the rabble, and felt some uneasiness lest the example should infect their own tenants.

A large party of them met at the house of Lord Cæsar Germain. Lord Cæsar was the proudest man in the county. His family was very ancient and illustrious, though not particularly opulent. He had invited most of his wealthy neighbors. There was Mrs. Kitty North, the relict of poor Squire Peter, respecting whom the coroner's jury had found a verdict of accidental death, but whose fate had nevertheless excited strange whispers in the neighborhood. There was Squire Don, the owner of the great West Indian property, who was not so rich as he had formerly been, but still retained his pride, and kept up his customary pomp ; so that he had plenty of plate but no breeches. There was Squire Von Blunderbussen, who had succeeded to the estates of his uncle, old Colonel Frederic Von Blunderbussen, of the hussars. The colonel was a very singular old fellow ; he used to learn a page of Chambaud's gram-

mar, and to translate Télémaque, every morning, and he kept six French masters to teach him to parleyvoo. Nevertheless, he was a shrewd, clever man, and improved his estate with so much care, sometimes by honest and sometimes by dishonest means, that he left a very pretty property to his nephew.

Lord Cæsar poured out a glass of Tokay for Mrs. Kitty. "Your health, my dear madam; I never saw you look more charming. Pray, what think you of these doings at St. Dennis's?"

"Fine doings, indeed!" interrupted Von Blunderbussen; "I wish that we had my old uncle alive; he would have had some of them up to the halberts. He knew how to use a cat-o'-nine-tails. If things go on in this way, a gentleman will not be able to horsewhip an impudent farmer, or to say a civil word to a milkmaid."

"Indeed, it 's very true, sir," said Mrs. Kitty; "their insolence is intolerable. Look at me, for instance—a poor lone woman! My dear Peter dead! I loved him—so I did; and, when he died, I was so hysterical you cannot think. And now I cannot lean on the arm of a decent footman, or take a walk with a tall grenadier behind me, just to protect me from audacious vagabonds, but they must have their nauseous suspicions—odious creatures!"

"This must be stopped," replied Lord Cæsar. "We ought to contribute to support my poor brother-in-law against these rascals. I will write to Squire Guelf on this subject by this night's post. His name is always at the head of our county subscriptions."

If the people of St. Dennis's had been angry before, they were well-nigh mad when they heard of this con-

versation. The whole parish ran to the manor-house. Sir Lewis's Swiss porter shut the door against them ; but they broke in and knocked him on the head for his impudence. They then seized the squire, hooted at him, pelted him, ducked him, and carried him to the watch-house. They turned the rector into the street, burned his wig and band, and sold the church-plate by auction. They put up a painted Jezebel in the pulpit to preach. They scratched out the texts which were written round the church, and scribbled profane scraps of songs and plays in their place. They set the organ playing to pot-house tunes. Instead of being decently asked in church, they were married over a broomstick. But, of all their whims, the use of the new patent steel-traps was the most remarkable.

This trap was constructed on a completely new principle. It consisted of a cleaver hung in a frame like a window ; when any poor wretch got in, down it came with a tremendous din, and took off his head in a twinkling. They got the squire into one of these machines. In order to prevent any of his partisans from getting footing in the parish, they placed traps at every corner. It was impossible to walk through the highway at broad noon without tumbling into one or other of them. No man could go about his business in security. Yet so great was the hatred which the inhabitants entertained for the old family, that a few decent, honest people, who begged them to take down the steel-traps, and to put up humane man-traps in their room, were very roughly handled for their good-nature.

In the meantime the neighboring gentry undertook a suit against the parish on behalf of Sir Lewis's heir, and applied to Squire Guelf for his assistance.

Everybody knows that Squire Guelf is more closely tied up than any gentleman in the shire. He could, therefore, lend them no help ; but he referred them to the Vestry of the Parish of St. George in the Water. These good people had long borne a grudge against their neighbors on the other side of the stream ; and some mutual trespasses had lately occurred which increased their hostility.

There was an honest Irishman, a great favorite among them, who used to entertain them with raree-shows, and to exhibit a magic lantern to the children on winter evenings. He had gone quite mad upon this subject. Sometimes he would call out in the middle of the street—" Take care of that corner, neighbors ; for the love of Heaven, keep clear of that post ! there is a patent steel-trap concealed thereabouts." Sometimes he would be disturbed by frightful dreams ; then he would get up at dead of night, open his window and cry " fire ! " till the parish was roused and the engines sent for. The pulpit of the Parish of St. George seemed likely to fall ; I believe that the only reason was that the parson had grown too fat and heavy ; but nothing would persuade this honest man but that it was a scheme of the people at St. Dennis's, and that they had sawed through the pillars in order to break the rector's neck. Once he went about with a knife in his pocket, and told all the persons whom he met that it had been sharpened by the knife-grinder of the next parish to cut their throats. These extravagances had a great effect on the people ; and the more so because they were espoused by Squire Guelf's steward, who was the most influential person in the parish. He was a very fair-spoken man, very atten-

tive to the main chance, and the idol of the old women, because he never played at skittles or danced with the girls ; and, indeed, never took any recreation but that of drinking on Saturday nights with his friend Harry, the Scotch peddler. His supporters called him Sweet William ; his enemies, the Bottomless Pit.

The people of St. Dennis's, however, had their advocates. There was Frank, the richest farmer in the parish, whose great-grandfather had been knocked on the head many years before, in a squabble between the parish and a former landlord. There was Dick, the merry-andrew, rather light-fingered and riotous, but a clever, droll fellow. Above all, there was Charley, the publican, a jolly, fat, honest lad, a great favorite with the women, who, if he had not been rather too fond of ale and chuck-farthing, would have been the best fellow in the neighborhood.

" My boys," said Charley, " this is exceedingly well for Madam North ; not that I would speak uncivilly of her ; she put up my picture in her best room, bless her for it ! But I say, this is very well for her, and for Lord Cæsar, and Squire Don, and Colonel Von—but what affair is it of yours or mine ? It is not to be wondered at that gentlemen should wish to keep poor people out of their own ; but it is strange, indeed, that they should expect the poor themselves to combine against their own interests. If the folks of St. Dennis's should attack us, we have the law and our cudgels to protect us. But why, in the name of wonder, are we to attack them ? When old Sir Charles, who was Lord of the Manor formerly, and the parson, who was presented by him to the living, tried to bully the vestry, did not we knock their heads together, and go to

meeting to hear Jeremiah Ringletub preach? And did the Squire Don, or the great Sir Lewis, that lived at that time, or the Germains, say a word against us for it? Mind your own business, my lads: law is not to be had for nothing; and we, you may be sure, shall have to pay the whole bill."

Nevertheless, the people of St. George's were resolved on law. They cried out most lustily, "Squire Guelf forever! Sweet William forever! No steel-traps!" Squire Guelf took all the rascally footmen who had worn old Sir Lewis's livery into his service. They were fed in the kitchen on the very best of everything, though they had no settlement. Many people, and the paupers in particular, grumbled at these proceedings. The steward, however, devised a way to keep them quiet.

There had lived in this parish for many years an old gentleman, named Sir Habeas Corpus. He was said by some to be of Saxon, by some to be of Norman, extraction. Some maintain that he was not born till after the time of Sir Charles, to whom we have before alluded. Others are of opinion that he was a legitimate son of old Lady Magna Charta, although he was long concealed and kept out of his birthright. Certain it is that he was a very benevolent person. Whenever any poor fellow was taken up on grounds which he thought insufficient, he used to attend on his behalf and bail him; and thus he had become so popular, that to take direct measures against him was out of the question.

The steward, accordingly, brought a dozen physicians to examine Sir Habeas. After consultation, they reported that he was in a very bad way, and ought not,

on any account, to be allowed to stir out for several months. Fortified with this authority, the parish officers put him to bed, closed his windows, and barred his doors. They paid him every attention, and from time to time issued bulletins of his health. The steward never spoke of him without declaring that he was the best gentleman in the world ; but excellent care was taken that he should never stir out-of-doors.

When this obstacle was removed, the squire and the steward kept the parish in excellent order ; flogged this man, sent that man to the stocks, and pushed forward the lawsuit with a noble disregard of expense. They were, however, wanting either in skill or in fortune. And everything went against them after their antagonists had begun to employ Solicitor Nap.

Who does not know the name of Solicitor Nap? At what alehouse is not his behavior discussed? In what print-shop is not his picture seen? Yet how little truth has been said about him! Some people hold that he used to give laudanum by pints to his sick clerks for his amusement. Others, whose number has very much increased since he was killed by the jail distemper, conceive that he was the very model of honor and good-nature. I shall try to tell the truth about him.

He was, assuredly, an excellent solicitor. In his way he never was surpassed. As soon as the parish began to employ him, their cause took a turn. In a very little time they were successful, and Nap became rich. He now set up for a gentleman ; took possession of the old manor-house ; got into the commission of the peace, and affected to be on a par with the best of the county. He governed the vestries as absolutely as

the old family had done. Yet, to give him his due, he managed things with far more discretion than either Sir Lewis or the rioters who had pulled the Lords of the Manor down. He kept his servants in tolerable order. He removed the steel-traps from the highways and the corners of the streets. He still left a few, indeed, in the more exposed parts of his premises, and set up a board announcing that traps and spring-guns were set in his grounds. He brought the poor parson back to the parish ; and, though he did not enable him to keep a fine house and a coach as formerly, he settled him in a snug little cottage, and allowed him a pleasant pad-nag. He whitewashed the church again ; and put the stocks, which had been much wanted of late, into good repair.

With the neighboring gentry, however, he was no favorite. He was crafty and litigious. He cared nothing for right, if he could raise a point of law against them. He pounded their cattle, broke their hedges, and seduced their tenants from them. He almost ruined Lord Cæsar with actions, in every one of which he was successful. Von Blunderbussen went to law with him for an alleged trespass, but was cast, and almost ruined by the cost of suit. He next took a fancy to the seat of Squire Don, who was, to say the truth, little better than an idiot. He asked the poor dupe to dinner, and then threatened to have him tossed in a blanket unless he would make over his estates to him. The poor squire signed and sealed a deed by which the property was assigned to Joe, a brother of Nap's, in trust for and to the use of Nap himself. The tenants, however, stood out. They maintained that the estate was entailed, and refused to pay rents to the new

landlord ; and in this refusal they were stoutly supported by the people in St. George's.

About the same time Nap took it into his head to match with quality, and nothing would serve him but one of the Miss Germains. Lord Cæsar swore like a trooper ; but there was no help for it. Nap had twice put executions in his principal residence, and had refused to discharge the latter of the two till he had extorted a bond from his lordship, which compelled him to comply.

A CONVERSATION

BETWEEN

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY AND MR. JOHN MILTON,

TOUCHING THE GREAT CIVIL WAR

SET DOWN BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE
(AUGUST, 1824)

> "Referre sermones Deorum et
> Magna modis tenuare parvis."—HORACE.

I HAVE thought it good to set down in writing a memorable debate, wherein I was a listener, and two men of pregnant parts and great reputation discoursers; hoping that my friends will not be displeased to have a record both of the strange times through which I have lived, and of the famous men with whom I have conversed. It chanced, in the warm and beautiful spring of 1665, a little before the saddest summer that ever London saw, that I went to the Bowling Green at Piccadilly, whither, at that time, the best gentry made continual resort. There I met Mr. Cowley, who had lately left Barnelms. There was then a house preparing for him at Chertsey; and, till it should be finished, he had come up for a short time to London,

that he might urge a suit to his Grace of Buckingham touching certain lands of her Majesty's, whereof he requested a lease. I had the honor to be familiarly acquainted with that worthy gentleman and most excellent poet, whose death hath been deplored with as general a consent of all Powers that delight in the woods, or in verse, or in love, as was of old that of Daphnis or of Gallus.

After some talk, which it is not material to set down at large, concerning his suit and his vexations at the court, where, indeed, his honesty did him more harm than his parts could do him good, I entreated him to dine with me at my lodging in the Temple, which he most courteously promised. And that so eminent a guest might not lack a better entertainment than cooks or vintners can provide, I sent to the house of Mr. John Milton, in the Artillery-Walk, to beg that he would also be my guest. For, though he had been secretary, first to the Council of State, and after that to the Protector, and Mr. Cowley had held the same post under the Lord St. Albans in his banishment, I hoped, notwithstanding, that they would think themselves rather united by their common art than divided by their different factions. And so, indeed, it proved; for while we sat at table they talked freely of many men and things, as well ancient as modern, with much civility. Nay, Mr. Milton, who seldom tasted wine, both because of his singular temperance and because of his gout, did more than once pledge Mr. Cowley, who was indeed no hermit in diet. At last, being heated, Mr. Milton begged that I would open the windows. "Nay," said I, "if you desire fresh air and coolness, what should hinder us, as the evening is fair,

from sailing for an hour on the river?" To this both cheerfully consented; and forth we walked, Mr. Cowley and I leading Mr. Milton between us, to the Temple Stairs. There we took a boat, and thence we were rowed up the river.

The wind was pleasant; the evening fine; the sky, the earth, and the water beautiful to look upon. But Mr. Cowley and I held our peace, and said nothing of the gay sights around us, lest we should too feelingly remind Mr. Milton of his calamity; whereof, however, he needed no monitor; for soon he said, sadly, "Ah, Mr. Cowley, you are a happy man. What would I now give but for one more look at the sun, and the waters, and the gardens of this fair city!"

"I know not," said Mr. Cowley, "whether we ought not rather to envy you for that which makes you to envy others; and that specially in this place, where all eyes which are not closed in blindness ought to become fountains of tears. What can we look upon which is not a memorial of change and sorrow, of fair things vanished, and evil things done? When I see the gate of Whitehall, and the stately pillars of the Banqueting-house, I cannot choose but think of what I have there seen in former days—masques, and pageants, and dances, and smiles, and the waving of graceful heads, and the bounding of delicate feet. And then I turn to thoughts of other things, which even to remember makes me to blush and weep—of the great black scaffold, and the axe and block, which were placed before those very windows; and the voice seems to sound in mine ears, the lawless and terrible voice, which cried out that the head of a king was the head of a traitor. There stands Westminster Hall, which who can look

upon and not tremble to think how time, and change, and death confound the counsels of the wise, and beat down the weapons of the mighty? How have I seen it surrounded with tens of thousands of petitioners crying for justice and privilege! How have I heard it shake with fierce and proud words, which made the hearts of the people burn within them! Then it is blockaded by dragoons, and cleared by pikemen. And they who have conquered their master go forth trembling at the word of their servant. And yet a little while, and the usurper comes forth from it, in his robe of ermine, with the golden staff in one hand and the Bible in the other, amidst the roaring of the guns and the shouting of the people. And yet again a little while, and the doors are thronged with multitudes in black, and the hearse and the plumes come forth; and the tyrant is borne, in more than royal pomp, to a royal sepulchre. A few days more, and his head is fixed to rot on the pinnacles of that very hall where he sat on a throne in his life, and lay in state after his death. When I think on all these things, to look round me makes me sad at heart. True it is that God hath restored to us our old laws, and the rightful line of our kings. Yet how I know not, but it seems to me that something is wanting—that our court hath not the old gravity, nor our people the old loyalty. These evil times, like the great deluge, have overwhelmed and confused all earthly things. And, even as those waters, though at last they abated, yet, as the learned write, destroyed all trace of the garden of Eden, so that its place hath never since been found, so hath this opening of all the flood-gates of political evil effaced all marks of the ancient political paradise."

"Sir, by your favor," said Mr. Milton, "though, from many circumstances both of body and of fortune, I might plead fairer excuses for despondency than yourself, I yet look not so sadly either on the past or on the future. That a deluge hath passed over this our nation, I deny not. But I hold it not to be such a deluge as that of which you speak; but rather a blessed flood, like those of the Nile, which in its overflow doth indeed wash away ancient landmarks, and confound boundaries, and sweep away dwellings, yea, doth give birth to many foul and dangerous reptiles. Yet hence is the fulness of the granary, the beauty of the garden, the nurture of all living things.

"I remember well, Mr. Cowley, what you have said concerning these things in your Discourse of the Government of Oliver Cromwell, which my friend Elwood read to me last year. Truly, for elegance and rhetoric, that essay is to be compared with the finest tractates of Isocrates and Cicero. But neither that nor any other book, nor any events, which with most men have, more than any book, weight and authority, have altered my opinion, that, of all assemblies that ever were in this world, the best and the most useful was our Long Parliament. I speak not this as wishing to provoke debate; which neither yet do I decline."

Mr. Cowley was, as I could see, a little nettled. Yet, as he was a man of a kind disposition and a most refined courtesy, he put a force upon himself, and answered with more vehemence and quickness indeed than was his wont, yet not uncivilly. "Surely, Mr. Milton, you speak not as you think. I am, indeed, one of those who believe that God hath reserved to himself the censure of kings, and that their crimes and

oppressions are not to be resisted by the hands of their subjects. Yet can I easily find excuse for the violence of such as are stung to madness by grievous tyranny. But what shall we say for these men? Which of their just demands was not granted? Which even of their cruel and unreasonable requisitions, so as it were not inconsistent with all law and order, was refused? Had they not sent Strafford to the block and Laud to the Tower? Had they not destroyed the Courts of the High Commission and the Star-chamber? Had they not reversed the proceedings confirmed by the voices of the judges of England in the matter of ship-money? Had they not taken from the King his ancient and most lawful power touching the order of knighthood? Had they not provided that, after their dissolution, triennial Parliaments should be holden, and that their own power should continue till of their great condescension they should be pleased to resign it themselves? What more could they ask? Was it not enough that they had taken from their king all his oppressive powers, and many that were most salutary? Was it not enough that they had filled his council-board with his enemies, and his prisons with his adherents? Was it not enough that they had raised a furious multitude, to shout and swagger daily under the very windows of his royal palace? Was it not enough that they had taken from him the most blessed prerogative of princely mercy; that, complaining of intolerance themselves, they had denied all toleration to others; that they had urged, against forms, scruples childish as those of any formalist; that they had persecuted the least remnant of the popish rites with the fiercest bitterness of the popish spirit? Must they, be-

sides all this, have full power to command his armies and to massacre his friends?

"For military command, it was never known in any monarchy, nay, in any well ordered republic, that it was committed to the debates of a large and unsettled assembly. For their other requisition, that he should give up to their vengeance all who had defended the rights of his crown, his honor must have been ruined if he had complied. Is it not, therefore, plain that they desired these things only in order that, by refusing, his Majesty might give them a pretence for war?

"Men have often risen up against fraud, against cruelty, against rapine. But when before was it known that concessions were met with importunities, graciousness with insults, the open palm of bounty with the clinched fist of malice? Was it like trusty delegates of the Commons of England, and faithful stewards of their liberty and their wealth, to engage them for such causes in civil war, which both to liberty and to wealth is of all things the most hostile? Evil, indeed, must be the disease which is not more tolerable than such a medicine. Those who, even to save a nation from tyrants, excite it to civil war, do in general but minister to it the same miserable kind of relief wherewith the wizards of Pharaoh mocked the Egyptian. We read that when Moses had turned their waters into blood, those impious magicians, intending, not benefit to the thirsting people, but vain and emulous ostentation of their own art, did themselves also change into blood the water which the plague had spared. Such sad comfort do those who stir up war minister to the oppressed. But here where was the oppression? What was the favor which had not been granted? What was the evil which had

not been removed? What further could they desire?"

"These questions," said Mr. Milton, austerely, "have indeed often deceived the ignorant; but that Mr. Cowley should have been so beguiled, I marvel. You ask what more Parliament could desire? I will answer you in one word, security. What are votes, and statutes, and resolutions? They have no eyes to see, no hands to strike and avenge. They must have some safeguard from without. Many things, therefore, which in themselves were peradventure hurtful, was this Parliament constrained to ask, lest otherwise good laws and precious rights should be without defence. Nor did they want a great and signal example of this danger. I need not remind you that, many years before, the two Houses had presented to the King the Petition of Right, wherein were set down all the most valuable privileges of the people of this realm. Did not Charles accept it? Did he not declare it to be law? Was it not as fully enacted as ever were any of those bills of the Long Parliament concerning which you spoke? And were those privileges, therefore, enjoyed more fully by the people? No: the King did from that time redouble his oppressions, as if to avenge himself for the shame of having been compelled to renounce them. Then were our estates laid under shameful impositions, our houses ransacked, our bodies imprisoned. Then was the steel of the hangman blunted with mangling the ears of harmless men. Then our very minds were fettered, and the iron entered into our souls. Then we were compelled to hide our hatred, our sorrow, and our scorn; to laugh with hidden faces at the mummery of Laud, to curse

under our breath the tyranny of Wentworth. Of old time it was well and nobly said, by one of our kings, that an Englishman ought to be free as his thoughts. Our prince reversed the maxim ; he strove to make our thoughts as much slaves as ourselves. To sneer at a Romish pageant, to miscall a lord's crest, were crimes for which there was no mercy. These were all the fruits which we gathered from those excellent laws of the former Parliament, from these solemn promises of the King. Were we to be deceived again ? Were we again to give subsidies, and receive nothing but promises ? Were we again to make wholesome statutes, and then leave them to be broken daily and hourly, until the oppressor should have squandered another supply, and should be ready for another perjury ? You ask what they could desire which he had not already granted. Let me ask of you another question. What pledge could he give which he had not already violated ? From the first year of his reign, whenever he had need of the purses of his Commons to support the revels of Buckingham or the processions of Laud, he had assured them that, as he was a gentleman and a king, he would sacredly preserve their rights. He had pawned those solemn pledges, and pawned them again and again ; but when had he redeemed them ? ' Upon my faith,'—' Upon my sacred word,'—' Upon the honor of a prince,' came so easily from his lips, and dwelt so short a time on his mind, that they were as little to be trusted as the ' By these hilts ' of an Alsatian dicer.

" Therefore it is that I praise this Parliament for what else I might have condemned. If what he had granted had been granted graciously and readily, if

what he had before promised had been faithfully observed, they could not be defended. It was because he had never yielded the worst abuse without a long struggle, and seldom without a large bribe ; it was because he had no sooner disentangled himself from his troubles than he forgot his promises; and, more like a villanous huckster than a great king, kept both the prerogative and the large price which had been paid to him to forego it ; it was because of these things that it was necessary and just to bind with forcible restraints one who could be bound neither by law nor honor. Nay, even while he was making those very concessions of which you speak, he betrayed his deadly hatred against the people and their friends. Not only did he, contrary to all that ever was deemed lawful in England, order that members of the Commons House of Parliament should be impeached of high-treason at the bar of the Lords ; thereby violating both the trial by jury and the privileges of the House ; but, not content with breaking the law by his ministers, he went himself armed to assail it. In the birthplace and sanctuary of freedom, in the House itself, nay, in the very chair of the speaker, placed for the protection of free speech and privilege, he sat, rolling his eyes round the benches, searching for those whose blood he desired, and singling out his opposers to the slaughter. This most foul outrage fails. Then again for the old arts. Then come gracious messages. Then come courteous speeches. Then is again mortgaged his often forfeited honor. He will never again violate the laws. He will respect their rights as if they were his own. He pledges the dignity of his crown ; that crown which had been committed to him for the weal of his people, and which he never

named but that he might the more easily delude and oppress them.

"The power of the sword, I grant you, was not one to be permanently possessed by Parliament. Neither did that Parliament demand it as a permanent possession. They asked it only for temporary security. Nor can I see on what conditions they could safely make peace with that false and wicked king, save such as would deprive him of all power to injure.

"For civil war, that it is an evil I dispute not. But that it is the greatest of evils, that I stoutly deny. It doth, indeed, appear to the misjudging to be a worse calamity than bad government, because its miseries are collected together within a short space and time, and may easily at one view be taken in and perceived. But the misfortunes of nations ruled by tyrants, being distributed over many centuries and many places, as they are of greater weight and number, so are they of less display. When the Devil of tyranny hath gone into the body politic he departs not but with struggles, and foaming, and great convulsions. Shall he, therefore, vex it forever, lest, in going out, he for a moment tear and rend it? Truly this argument touching the evils of war would better become my friend Elwood, or some other of the people called Quakers, than a courtier and a cavalier. It applies no more to this war than to all others, as well foreign as domestic, and, in this war, no more to the Houses than to the King; nay, not so much, since he by a little sincerity and moderation might have rendered that needless which their duty to God and man then enforced them to do."

"Pardon me, Mr. Milton," said Mr. Cowley; "I grieve to hear you speak thus of that good King. Most

unhappy indeed he was, in that he reigned at a time when the spirit of the then living generation was for freedom, and the precedents of former ages for prerogative. His case was like to that of Christopher Columbus when he sailed forth on an unknown ocean, and found that the compass, whereby he shaped his course, had shifted from the north pole whereto before it had constantly pointed. So it was with Charles. His compass varied ; and therefore he could not tack aright. If he had been an absolute king, he would doubtless, like Titus Vespasian, have been called the delight of the human race. If he had been a Doge of Venice, or a Stadtholder of Holland, he would never have outstepped the laws. But he lived when our government had neither clear definitions nor strong sanctions. Let, therefore, his faults be ascribed to the time. Of his virtues the praise is his own.

" Never was there a more gracious prince, or a more proper gentleman. In every pleasure he was temperate; in conversation, mild and grave; in friendship, constant; to his servants, liberal; to his queen, faithful and loving ; in battle, brave ; in sorrow and captivity, resolved ; in death, most Christian and forgiving.

" For his oppressions, let us look at the former history of this realm. James was never accounted a tyrant. Elizabeth is esteemed to have been the mother of her people. Were they less arbitrary ? Did they never lay hands on the purses of their subjects but by Act of Parliament ? Did they never confine insolent and disobedient men but in due course of law ? Was the court of Star-chamber less active ? Were the ears of libellers more safe ? I pray you, let not King Charles be thus dealt with. It was enough that in his life he

was tried for an alleged breach of laws which none ever heard named till they were discovered for his destruction. Let not his fame be treated as was his sacred and anointed body. Let not his memory be tried by principles found out *ex post facto*. Let us not judge by the spirit of one generation a man whose disposition had been formed by the temper and fashion of another."

"Nay, but conceive me, Mr. Cowley," said Mr. Milton; "inasmuch as, at the beginning of his reign, he imitated those who had governed before him, I blame him not. To expect that kings will, of their own free choice, abridge their prerogative, were argument of but slender wisdom. Whatever, therefore, lawless, unjust, or cruel, he either did or permitted during the first years of his reign, I pass by. But for what was done after that he had solemnly given his consent to the Petition of Right, where shall we find defence? Let it be supposed, which yet I concede not, that the tyranny of his father and of Queen Elizabeth had been no less rigorous than was his. But had his father, had that queen, sworn, like him, to abstain from those rigors? Had they, like him, for good and valuable consideration, aliened their hurtful prerogatives? Surely not: from whatever excuse you can plead for him he had wholly excluded himself. The borders of countries, we know, are mostly the seats of perpetual wars and tumults. It was the same with the undefined frontiers which of old separated privilege and prerogative. They were the debatable land of our polity. It was no marvel if, both on the one side and on the other, inroads were often made. But when treaties have been concluded, spaces measured, lines drawn, landmarks set up, that which before might

pass for innocent error or just reprisal becomes robbery, perjury, deadly sin. He knew not, you say, which of his powers were founded on ancient law, and which only on vicious example. But had he not read the Petition of Right? Had not proclamation been made from his throne—*Soit fait comme il est desiré?*

"For his private virtues they are beside the question. Remember you not," and Mr. Milton smiled, but somewhat sternly, "what Dr. Caius saith in the Merry Wives of Shakspeare? 'What shall the honest man do in my closet? There is no honest man that shall come in my closet.' Even so say I. There is no good man who shall make us his slaves. If he break his word to his people, is it a sufficient defence that he keeps it to his companions? If he oppress and extort all day, shall he be held blameless because he prayeth at night and morning? If he be insatiable in plunder and revenge, shall we pass it by because in meat and drink he is temperate? If he have lived like a tyrant, shall all be forgotten because he hath died like a martyr?

"He was a man, as I think, who had so much semblance of virtues as might make his vices most dangerous. He was not a tyrant after our wonted English model. The second Richard, the second and fourth Edwards, and the eighth Harry, were men profuse, gay, boisterous; lovers of women and of wine, of no outward sanctity or gravity. Charles was a ruler after the Italian fashion; grave, demure, of a solemn carriage, and a sober diet; as constant at prayers as a priest, as heedless of oaths as an atheist."

Mr. Cowley answered somewhat sharply: "I am sorry, sir, to hear you speak thus. I had hoped that

the vehemence of spirit which was caused by these violent times had now abated. Yet, sure, Mr. Milton, whatever you may think of the character of King Charles, you will not justify his murder."

"Sir," said Mr. Milton, "I must have been of a hard and strange nature, if the vehemence which was imputed to me in my younger days had not been diminished by the afflictions wherewith it hath pleased Almighty God to chasten my age. I will not now defend all that I may heretofore have written. But this I say, that I perceive not wherefore a king should be exempted from all punishment. It is just that where most is given least should be required? Or politic that where there is the greatest power to injure there should be no danger to restrain? But, you will say, there is no such law. Such a law there is. There is the law of self-preservation, written by God himself on our hearts. There is the primal compact and bond of society, not graven on stone, nor sealed with wax, nor put down on parchment, nor set forth in any express form of words by men when of old they came together; but implied in the very act that they so came together, presupposed in all subsequent law, not to be repealed by any authority, not invalidated by being omitted in any code; inasmuch as from thence are all codes and all authority.

"Neither do I well see wherefore you Cavaliers, and, indeed, many of us whom you merrily call Roundheads, distinguish between those who fought against King Charles, and specially after the second commission given to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and those who condemned him to death. Sure, if his person were inviolable, it was as wicked to lift the sword against it at

Naseby as the axe at Whitehall. If his life might justly be taken, why not in course of trial as well as by right of war?

"Thus much in general as touching the right. But, for the execution of King Charles in particular, I will not now undertake to defend it. Death is inflicted, not that the culprit may die, but that the State may be thereby advantaged. And, from all that I know, I think that the death of King Charles, hath more hindered than advanced the liberties of England.

"First, he left an heir. He was in captivity: the heir was in freedom. He was odious to the Scots: the heir was favored by them. To kill the captive therefore, whereby the heir, in the apprehension of all royalists, became forthwith King—what was it, in truth, but to set their captive free, and to give him, besides, other great advantages?

"Next, it was a deed most odious to the people, and not only to your party, but to many among ourselves; and, as it is perilous for any government to outrage the public opinion, so most was it perilous for a government which had from that opinion alone its birth, its nurture, and its defence.

"Yet doth not this properly belong to our dispute; nor can these faults be justly charged upon that most renowned Parliament. For, as you know, the high court of justice was not established until the House had been purged of such members as were adverse to the army, and brought wholly under the control of the chief officers."

"And who," said Mr. Cowley, "levied that army? Who commissioned those officers? Was not the fate of the Commons as justly deserved as was that of

Diomedes, who was devoured by those horses whom he had himself taught to feed on the flesh and blood of men? How could they hope that others would respect laws which they had themselves insulted? that swords which had been drawn against the prerogatives of the King would be put up at an ordinance of the Commons? It was believed, of old, that there were some devils easily raised, but never to be laid; insomuch that, if a magician called them up, he should be forced to find them always some employment; for, though they would do all his bidding, yet, if he left them but for one moment without some work of evil to perform, they would turn their claws against himself. Such a fiend is an army. They who evoke it cannot dismiss it. They are at once its masters and its slaves. Let them not fail to find for it task after task of blood and rapine. Let them not leave it for a moment in repose, lest it tear them in pieces.

"Thus was it with that famous assembly. They formed a force which they could neither govern nor resist. They made it powerful. They made it fanatical. As if military insolence were not of itself sufficiently dangerous, they heightened it with spiritual pride; they encouraged their soldiers to rave from the tops of tubs against the men of Belial, till every trooper thought himself a prophet. They taught them to abuse popery, till every drummer fancied that he was as infallible as a pope.

"Then it was that Religion changed her nature. She was no longer the parent of arts and letters, of wholesome knowledge, of innocent pleasures, of blessed household smiles. In their place came sour faces, whining voices, the chattering of fools, the yells of

madmen. Then men fasted from meat and drink who fasted not from bribes and blood. Then men frowned at stage-plays, who smiled at massacres. Then men preached against painted faces, who felt no remorse for their own most painted lives. Religion had been a pole-star to light and to guide. It was now more like to that ominous star in the book of the Apocalypse, which fell from heaven upon the fountains and rivers and changed them into wormwood ; for even so did it descend from its high and celestial dwelling-place to plague this earth, and to turn into bitterness all that was sweet, and into poison all that was nourishing.

"Therefore it was not strange that such things should follow. They who had closed the barriers of London against the King could not defend them against their own creatures. They who had so stoutly cried for privilege, when that prince, most unadvisedly, no doubt, came among them to demand their members, durst not wag their fingers when Oliver filled their hall with soldiers, gave their mace to a corporal, put their keys in his pocket, and drove them forth with base terms, borrowed half from the conventicle and half from the ale-house. Then were we, like the trees of the forest in holy writ, given over to the rule of the bramble ; then from the basest of the shrubs came forth the fire which devoured the cedars of Lebanon. We bowed down before a man of mean birth, of ungraceful demeanor, of stammering and most vulgar utterance, of scandalous and notorious hypocrisy. Our laws were made and unmade at his pleasure ; the constitution of our parliaments changed by his writ and proclamation ; our persons imprisoned ; our property plundered ; our lands and houses overrun with soldiers ; and the great

charter itself was but argument for a scurrilous jest ; and for all this we may thank that Parliament : for never, unless they had so violently shaken the vessel, could such foul dregs have risen to the top."

Then answered Mr. Milton : " What you have now said comprehends so great a number of subjects, that it would require, not an evening's sail on the Thames, but rather a voyage to the Indies, accurately to treat of all : yet, in as few words as I may, I will explain my sense of these matters.

" First, as to the army. An army, as you have well set forth, is always a weapon dangerous to those who use it ; yet he who falls among thieves spares not to fire his musketoon, because he may be slain if it burst in his hand. Nor must States refrain from defending themselves, lest their defenders should at last turn against them. Nevertheless, against this danger statesmen should carefully provide; and, that they may do so, they should take especial care that neither the officers nor the soldiers do forget that they are also citizens. I do believe that the English army would have continued to obey the Parliament with all duty, but for one act, which, as it was in intention, in seeming, and in immediate effect, worthy to be compared with the most famous in history, so was it, in its final consequence, most injurious. I speak of that ordinance called the *self-denying*, and of the new model of the army. By those measures, the Commons gave up the command of their forces into the hands of men who were not of themselves. Hence, doubtless, derived no small honor to that noble assembly, which sacrificed to the hope of public good the assurance of private advantage. And, as to the conduct of the war, the scheme

prospered. Witness the battle of Naseby, and the memorable exploits of Fairfax in the West. But thereby the Parliament lost that hold on the soldiers, and that power to control them, which they retained while every regiment was commanded by their own members. Politicians there be who would wholly divide the legislative from the executive power. In the Golden Age this may have succeeded ; in the millennium it may succeed again. But, where great armies and great taxes are required, there the executive government must always hold a great authority, which authority, that it may not oppress and destroy the legislature, must be in some manner blended with it. The leaders of foreign mercenaries have always been most dangerous to a country. The officers of native armies, deprived of the civil privileges of other men, are as much to be feared. This was the great error of that Parliament ; and, though an error it were, it was an error generous, virtuous, and more to be deplored than censured.

"Hence came the power of the army and its leaders, and especially of that most famous leader, whom both in our conversation to-day, and in that discourse whereon I before touched, you have, in my poor opinion, far too roughly handled. Wherefore you speak contemptibly of his parts I know not ; but I suspect that you are not free from the error common to studious and speculative men. Because Oliver was an ungraceful orator, and never said, either in public or private, anything memorable, you will have it that he was of mean capacity. Sure this is unjust. Many men have there been ignorant of letters, without wit, without eloquence, who yet had the wisdom to devise,

and the courage to perform, that which they lacked language to explain. Such men, often, in troubled times, have worked out the deliverance of nations and their own greatness, not by logic, not by rhetoric, but by wariness in success, by calmness in danger, by fierce and stubborn resolution in all adversity. The hearts of men are their books ; events are their tutors ; great actions are their eloquence : and such a one, in my judgment, was his late Highness, who, if none were to treat his name scornfully now who shook not at the sound of it while he lived, would, by very few, be mentioned otherwise than with reverence. His own deeds shall avouch him for a great statesman, a great soldier, a true lover of his country, a merciful and generous conqueror.

" For his faults, let us reflect that they who seem to lead are oftentimes most constrained to follow. They who will mix with men, and especially they who will govern them, must, in many things, obey them. They who will yield to no such conditions may be hermits, but cannot be generals and statesmen. If a man will walk straight forward without turning to the right or the left, he must walk in a desert, and not in Cheapside. Thus was he enforced to do many things which jumped not with his inclination nor made for his honor; because the army, on which alone he could depend for power and life, might not otherwise be contented. And I, for mine own part, marvel less that he sometimes was fain to indulge their violence than that he could so often restrain it.

" In that he dissolved the Parliament, I praise him. It then was so diminished in numbers, as well by the death as by the exclusion of members, that it was no

longer the same assembly ; and if at that time it had made itself perpetual, we should have been governed, not by an English House of Commons, but by a Venetian Council.

" If in his following rule he overstepped the laws, I pity rather than condemn him. He may be compared to that Mæandrius of Samos, of whom Herodotus saith, in his Thalia, that, wishing to be of all men the most just, he was not able ; for after the death of Polycrates he offered freedom to the people ; and not till certain of them threatened to call him to a reckoning for what he had formerly done did he change his purpose, and make himself a tyrant, lest he should be treated as a criminal.

Such was the case of Oliver. He gave to his country a form of government so free and admirable that, in near six thousand years, human wisdom hath never devised any more excellent contrivance for human happiness. To himself he reserved so little power that it would scarcely have sufficed for his safety, and it is a marvel that it could suffice for his ambition. When after that he found that the members of his Parliament disputed his right even to that small authority which he had kept, when he might have kept all, then, indeed, I own that he began to govern by the sword those who would not suffer him to govern by the law.

" But, for the rest, what sovereign was ever more princely in pardoning injuries, in conquering enemies, in extending the dominions and the renown of his people ? What sea, what shore did he not mark with imperishable memorials of his friendship or his vengeance ? The gold of Spain, the steel of Sweden, the ten thousand sails of Holland, availed nothing against

him. While every foreign State trembled at our arms, we sat secure from all assault. War, which often so strangely troubles both husbandry and commerce, never silenced the song of our reapers, or the sound of our looms. Justice was equally administered ; God was freely worshipped.

" Now look at that which we have taken in exchange. With the restored King have come over to us vices of every sort, and most the basest and most shameful—lust without love—servitude without loyalty—foulness of speech—dishonesty of dealing—grinning contempt of all things good and generous. The throne is surrounded by men whom the former Charles would have spurned from his footstool. The altar is served by slaves whose knees are supple to every being but God. Rhymers, whose books the hangman should burn, panders, actors, and buffoons, these drink a health and throw a main with the King ; these have stars on their breasts, and gold sticks in their hands ; these shut out from his presence the best and bravest of those who bled for his house. Even so doth God visit those who know not how to value freedom. He gives them over to the tyranny which they have desired, *"Ινα πάντες ἐπαύρωνται βασιλῆος.*"

" I will not," said Mr. Cowley, " dispute with you on this argument. But if it be as you say, how can you maintain that England hath been so greatly advantaged by the rebellion ? "

" Understand me rightly, sir," said Mr. Milton. " This nation is not given over to slavery and vice. We tasted, indeed, the fruits of liberty before they had well ripened. Their flavor was harsh and bitter ; and we turned from them with loathing to the sweeter

poisons of servitude. This is but for a time. England is sleeping on the lap of Delilah, traitorously chained but not yet shorn of strength. Let the cry be once heard, 'The Philistines be upon thee,' and at once that sleep will be broken, and those chains will be as flax in the fire. The great Parliament hath left behind it in our hearts and minds a hatred of tyrants, a just knowledge of our rights, a scorn of vain and deluding names ; and that the revellers of Whitehall shall surely find. The sun is darkened, but it is only for a moment : it is but an eclipse ; though all birds of evil omen have begun to scream, and all ravenous beasts have gone forth to prey, thinking it to be midnight. Woe to them if they be abroad when the rays again shine forth !

" The King hath judged ill. Had he been wise he would have remembered that he owed his restoration only to confusions which had wearied us out, and made us eager for repose. He would have known that the folly and perfidy of a prince would restore to the good old cause many hearts which had been alienated thence by the turbulence of factions ; for, if I know aught of history, or of the heart of man, he will soon learn that the last champion of the people was not destroyed when he murdered Vane, nor seduced when he beguiled Fairfax."

Mr. Cowley seemed to me not to take much amiss what Mr. Milton had said touching that thankless court, which had, indeed, but poorly requited his own good service. He only said, therefore, " Another rebellion ! Alas ! alas ! Mr. Milton ! If there be no choice but between despotism and anarchy, I prefer despotism."

" Many men," said Mr. Milton, " have floridly and

ingeniously compared anarchy and despotism; but they who so amuse themselves do but look at separate parts of that which is truly one great whole. Each is the cause and the effect of the other; the evils of either are the evils of both. Thus do States move on in the same eternal cycle, which, from the remotest point, brings them back again to the same sad starting-post: and, till both those who govern and those who obey shall learn and mark this great truth, men can expect little through the future, as they have known little through the past, save vicissitudes of extreme evils, alternately producing and produced.

"When will rulers learn that, where liberty is not, security and order can never be? We talk of absolute power; but all power hath limits, which, if not fixed by the moderation of the governors, will be fixed by the force of the governed. Sovereigns may send their opposers to dungeons; they may clear out a senate-house with soldiers; they may enlist armies of spies; they may hang scores of the disaffected in chains at every cross-road; but what power shall stand in that frightful time when rebellion hath become a less evil than endurance? Who shall dissolve that terrible tribunal, which, in the hearts of the oppressed, denounces against the oppressor the doom of its wild justice? Who shall repeal the law of self-defence? What arms or discipline shall resist the strength of famine and despair? How often were the ancient Cæsars dragged from their golden palaces, stripped of their purple robes, mangled, stoned, defiled with filth, pierced with hooks, hurled into Tiber? How often have the Eastern Sultans perished by the sabres of their own janizaries, or the bowstrings of their own mutes! For no power which is not limited by

laws can ever be protected by them. Small, therefore, is the wisdom of those who would fly to servitude as if it were a refuge from commotion ; for anarchy is the sure consequence of tyranny. That governments may be safe, nations must be free. Their passions must have an outlet provided, lest they make one.

" When I was at Naples, I went with Signor Manso, a gentleman of excellent parts and breeding, who had been the familiar friend of that famous poet Torquato Tasso, to see the burning mountain Vesuvius. I wondered how the peasants could venture to dwell so fearlessly and cheerfully on its sides, when the lava was flowing from its summit ; but Manso smiled, and told me that when the fire descends freely they retreat from it without haste or fear. They can tell how fast it will move, and how far ; and they know, moreover, that, though it may work some little damage, it will soon cover the fields over which it hath passed with rich vineyards and sweet flowers. But, when the flames are pent up in the mountain, then it is that they have reason to fear ; then it is that the earth sinks and the sea swells; then cities are swallowed up, and their place knoweth them no more. So it is in politics : where the people is most closely restrained, there it gives the greatest shocks to peace and order ; therefore would I say to all kings, let your demagogues lead crowds, lest they lead armies ; let them bluster, lest they massacre ; a little turbulence is, as it were, the rainbow of the State ; it shows, indeed, that there is a passing shower, but it is a pledge that there shall be no deluge."

" This is true," said Mr. Cowley ; " yet these admonitions are not less needful to subjects than to sovereigns."

"Surely," said Mr. Milton; "and that I may end this long debate with a few words in which we shall both agree, I hold that, as freedom is the only safeguard of governments, so are order and moderation generally necessary to preserve freedom. Even the vainest opinions of men are not to be outraged by those who propose to themselves the happiness of men for their end, and who must work with the passions of men for their means. The blind reverence for things ancient is indeed so foolish that it might make a wise man laugh, if it were not also sometimes so mischievous that it would rather make a good man weep. Yet, since it may not be wholly cured, it must be discreetly indulged; and therefore those who would amend evil laws should consider rather how much it may be safe to spare, than how much it may be possible to change. Have you not heard that men who have been shut up for many years in dungeons shrink if they see the light, and fall down if their irons be struck off. And so, when nations have long been in the house of bondage, the chains which have crippled them are necessary to support them, the darkness which hath weakened their sight is necessary to preserve it. Therefore release them not too rashly, lest they curse their freedom and pine for their prison.

"I think, indeed, that the renowned Parliament, of which we have talked so much, did show, until it became subject to the soldiers, a singular and admirable moderation, in such times scarcely to be hoped, and most worthy to be an example to all that shall come after. But on this argument I have said enough; and I will therefore only pray to Almighty God that those who shall, in future times, stand forth in defence of our

liberties, as well civil as religious, may adorn the good cause by mercy, prudence, and soberness, to the glory of his name and the happiness and honor of the English people."

And so ended that discourse ; and not long after we were set on shore again at the Temple-gardens, and there parted company : and the same evening I took notes of what had been said, which I have here more fully set down, from regard both to the fame of the men and the importance of the subject-matter.

ON THE ATHENIAN ORATORS.

(AUGUST, 1824.)

"To the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie,
Shook the arsenal, and fulmined over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne."—MILTON.

THE celebrity of the great classical writers is confined within no limits, except those which separate civilized from savage man. Their works are the common property of every polished nation. They have furnished subjects for the painter, and models for the poet. In the minds of the educated classes throughout Europe, their names are indissolubly associated with the endearing recollections of childhood—the old school-room—the dog-eared grammar—the first prize—the tears so often shed and so quickly dried. So great is the veneration with which they are regarded, that even the editors and commentators who perform the lowest menial offices to their memory are considered, like the equerries and chamberlains of sovereign princes, as entitled to a high rank in the table of literary precedence. It is, therefore, somewhat singular that their productions should so rarely have been

examined on just and philosophical principles of criticism.

The ancient writers themselves afford us but little assistance. When they particularize, they are commonly trivial: when they would generalize, they become indistinct. An exception must, indeed, be made in favor of Aristotle. Both in analysis and in combination, that great man was without a rival. No philosopher has ever possessed, in an equal degree, the talent either of separating established systems into their primary elements, or of connecting detached phenomena in harmonious systems. He was the great fashioner of the intellectual chaos; he changed its darkness into light, and its discord into order. He brought to literary researches the same vigor and amplitude of mind to which both physical and metaphysical science are so greatly indebted. His fundamental principles of criticism are excellent. To cite only a single instance—the doctrine which he established, that poetry is an imitative art, when justly understood, is to the critic what the compass is to the navigator. With it he may venture upon the most extensive excursions. Without it he must creep cautiously along the coast, or lose himself in a trackless expanse, and trust, at best, to the guidance of an occasional star. It is a discovery which changes a caprice into a science.

The general propositions of Aristotle are valuable. But the merit of the superstructure bears no proportion to that of the foundation. This is partly to be ascribed to the character of the philosopher, who, though qualified to do all that could be done by the resolving and combining powers of the understanding, seems not to

have possessed much of sensibility or imagination. Partly, also, it may be attributed to the deficiency of materials. The great works of genius which then existed were not either sufficiently numerous or sufficiently varied to enable any man to form a perfect code of literature. To require that a critic should conceive classes of composition which had never existed, and then investigate their principles, would be as unreasonable as the demand of Nebuchadnezzar, who expected his magicians first to tell him his dream, and then to interpret it.

With all his deficiencies, Aristotle was the most enlightened and profound critic of antiquity. Dionysius was far from possessing the same exquisite subtilty, or the same vast comprehension. But he had access to a much greater number of specimens ; and he had devoted himself, as it appears, more exclusively to the study of elegant literature. His peculiar judgments are of more value than his general principles. He is only the historian of literature. Aristotle is its philosopher.

Quintilian applied to general literature the same principles by which he had been accustomed to judge of the declamations of his pupils. He looks for nothing but rhetoric, and rhetoric not of the highest order. He speaks coldly of the incomparable works of Æschylus. He admires, beyond expression, those inexhaustible mines of commonplaces, the plays of Euripides. He bestows a few vague words on the poetical character of Homer. He then proceeds to consider him merely as an orator. An orator Homer doubtless was, and a great orator. But surely nothing is more remarkable, in his admirable works, than the art with which his

oratorical powers are made subservient to the purposes of poetry. Nor can I think Quintilian a great critic in his own province. Just as are many of his remarks, beautiful as are many of his illustrations, we can perpetually detect in his thoughts that flavor which the soil of despotism generally communicates to all the fruits of genius. Eloquence was, in his time, little more than a condiment which served to stimulate in a despot the jaded appetite for panegyric, an amusement for the travelled nobles and the blue-stocking matrons of Rome. It is, therefore, with him, rather a sport than a war ; it is a contest of foils, not of swords. He appears to think more of the grace of the attitude than of the direction and vigor of the thrust. It must be acknowledged, in justice to Quintilian, that this is an error to which Cicero has too often given the sanction both of his precept and of his example.

Longinus seems to have had great sensibility, but little discrimination. He gives us eloquent sentences, but no principles. It was happily said that Montesquieu ought to have changed the name of his book from *L'Esprit des Lois* to *L'Esprit sur les Lois*. In the same manner the philosopher of Palmyra ought to have entitled his famous work, not "Longinus on the Sublime," but "The Sublimities of Longinus." The origin of the sublime is one of the most curious and interesting subjects of inquiry that can occupy the attention of a critic. In our own country it has been discussed with great ability, and, I think, with very little success, by Burke and Dugald Stuart. Longinus dispenses himself from all investigations of this nature, by telling his friend Terentianus that he already knows everything that can be said upon the question. It is

to be regretted that Terentianus did not impart some of his knowledge to his instructor ; for from Longinus we learn only that sublimity means height, or elevation.[1] This name, so commodiously vague, is applied indifferently to the noble prayer of Ajax in the Iliad, and to a passage of Plato about the human body, as full of conceits as an ode of Cowley. Having no fixed standard, Longinus is right only by accident. He is rather a fancier than a critic.

Modern writers have been prevented by many causes from supplying the deficiencies of their classical predecessors. At the time of the revival of literature, no man could, without great and painful labor, acquire an accurate and elegant knowledge of the ancient languages. And, unfortunately, those grammatical and philological studies, without which it was impossible to understand the great works of Athenian and Roman genius, have a tendency to contract the views and deaden the sensibility of those who follow them with extreme assiduity. A powerful mind, which has been long employed in such studies, may be compared to the gigantic spirit in the Arabian tale, who was persuaded to contract himself to small dimensions in order to enter within the enchanted vessel, and, when his prison had been closed upon him, found himself unable to escape from the narrow boundaries to the measure of which he had reduced his stature. When the means have long been the objects of application, they are naturally substituted for the end. It was said, by Eugene of Savoy, that the greatest generals have commonly been those who have been at once raised to command, and introduced to the great operations of war, without be-

[1] Ἀκρότης καὶ ἐξοχή τις λόγων ἐστὶ τὰ ὕψη.

ing employed in the petty calculations and manœuvres which employ the time of an inferior officer. In literature the principle is equally sound. The great tactics of criticism will, in general, be best understood by those who have not had much practice in drilling syllables and particles.

I remember to have observed among the French Anas a ludicrous instance of this. A scholar, doubtless of great learning, recommends the study of some long Latin treatise, of which I now forget the name, on the religion, manners, government, and language of the early Greeks. "For there," says he, "you will learn everything of importance that is contained in the Iliad and Odyssey, without the trouble of reading two such tedious books." Alas! it had not occurred to the poor gentleman that all the knowledge to which he attached so much value was useful only as it illustrated the great poems which he despised, and would be as worthless for any other purpose as the mythology of Caffraria, or the vocabulary of Otaheite.

Of those scholars who have disdained to confine themselves to verbal criticism few have been successful. The ancient languages have, generally, a magical influence on their faculties. They were "fools called into a circle by Greek invocations." The Iliad and Æneid were to them not books, but curiosities, or rather relics. They no more admired those works for their merits than a good Catholic venerates the house of the Virgin at Loretto for its architecture. Whatever was classical was good. Homer was a great poet; and so was Callimachus. The epistles of Cicero were fine; and so were those of Phalaris. Even with respect to questions of evidence they fell into the same error.

The authority of all narrations, written in Greek or Latin, was the same with them. It never crossed their minds that the lapse of five hundred years, or the distance of five hundred leagues, could affect the accuracy of a narration ;—that Livy could be a less veracious historian than Polybius ;—or that Plutarch could know less about the friends of Xenophon than Xenophon himself. Deceived by the distance of time, they seem to consider all the classics as contemporaries ; just as I have known people in England, deceived by the distance of place, take it for granted that all persons who lived in India are neighbors, and ask an inhabitant of Bombay about the health of an acquaintance at Calcutta. It is to be hoped that no barbarian deluge will ever again pass over Europe. But, should such a calamity happen, it seems not improbable that some future Rollin or Gillies will compile a history of England from Miss Porter's Scottish Chiefs, Miss Lee's Recess, and Sir Nathaniel Wraxall's Memoirs.

It is surely time that ancient literature should be examined in a different manner, without pedantical prepossessions, but with a just allowance, at the same time, for the difference of circumstances and manners. I am far from pretending to the knowledge or ability which such a task would require. All that I mean to offer is a collection of desultory remarks upon a most interesting portion of Greek literature.

It may be doubted whether any compositions which have ever been produced in the world are equally perfect in their kind with the great Athenian orations. Genius is subject to the same laws which regulate the production of cotton and molasses. The supply adjusts itself to the demand. The quantity may be diminished

by restrictions, and multiplied by bounties. The singular excellence to which eloquence attained at Athens is to be mainly attributed to the influence which it exerted there. In turbulent times, under a constitution purely democratic, among a people educated exactly to that point at which men are most susceptible of strong and sudden impressions, acute, but not sound reasoners, warm in their feelings, unfixed in their principles, and passionate admirers of fine composition, oratory received such encouragement as it has never since obtained.

The taste and knowledge of the Athenian people was a favorite object of the contemptuous derision of Samuel Johnson—a man who knew nothing of Greek literature beyond the common school-books, and who seems to have brought to what he had read scarcely more than the discernment of a common school-boy. He used to assert, with that arrogant absurdity which, in spite of all his great abilities and virtues, renders him, perhaps, the most ridiculous character in literary history, that Demosthenes spoke to a people of brutes ; to a barbarous people ; that there could have been no civilization before the invention of printing. Johnson was a keen but a very narrow-minded observer of mankind. He perpetually confounded their general nature with their particular circumstances. He knew London intimately. The sagacity of his remarks on its society is perfectly astonishing. But Fleet Street was the world to him. He saw that Londoners who did not read were profoundly ignorant ; and he inferred that a Greek, who had few or no books, must have been as uninformed as one of Mr. Thrale's draymen.

There seems to be, on the contrary, every reason to believe that, in general intelligence, the Athenian

populace far surpassed the lower orders of any community that has ever existed. It must be considered that to be a citizen was to be a legislator, a soldier, a judge—one upon whose voice might depend the fate of the wealthiest tributary State, of the most eminent public man. The lowest offices, both of agriculture and of trade, were, in common, performed by slaves. The commonwealth supplied its meanest members with the support of life, the opportunity of leisure, and the means of amusement. Books were, indeed, few ; but they were excellent ; and they were accurately known. It is not by turning over libraries, but by repeatedly perusing and intently contemplating a few great models, that the mind is best disciplined. A man of letters must now read much that he soon forgets, and much from which he learns nothing worthy to be remembered. The best works employ, in general, but a small portion of his time. Demosthenes is said to have transcribed six times the history of Thucydides. If he had been a young politician of the present age, he might in the same space of time have skimmed innumerable newspapers and pamphlets. I do not condemn that desultory mode of study which the state of things, in our day, renders a matter of necessity. But I may be allowed to doubt whether the changes on which the admirers of modern institutions delight to dwell have improved our condition so much in reality as in appearance. Rumford, it is said, proposed to the Elector of Bavaria a scheme for feeding his soldiers at a much cheaper rate than formerly. His plan was simply to compel them to masticate their food thoroughly. A small quantity, thus eaten, would, according to that famous projector, afford more sustenance than a large

meal hastily devoured. I do not know how Rumford's proposition was received ; but to the mind, I believe, it will be found more nutritious to digest a page than to devour a volume.

Books, however, were the least part of the education of an Athenian citizen. Let us, for a moment, transport ourselves, in thought, to that glorious city. Let us imagine that we are entering its gates in the time of its power and glory. A crowd is assembled round a portico. All are gazing with delight at the entablature ; for Phidias is putting up the frieze. We turn into another street ; a rhapsodist is reciting there : men, women, children are thronging round him : the tears are running down their cheeks : their eyes are fixed : their very breath is still ; for he is telling how Priam fell at the feet of Achilles, and kissed those hands —the terrible, the murderous—which had slain so many of his sons.[1] We enter the public place ; there is a ring of youths, all leaning forward, with sparkling eyes, and gestures of expectation. Socrates is pitted against the famous atheist from Ionia, and has just brought him to a contradiction in terms. But we are interrupted. The herald is crying, " Room for the Prytanes." The general assembly is to meet. The people are swarming in on every side. Proclamation is made —" Who wishes to speak ? " There is a shout, and a clapping of hands : Pericles is mounting the stand. Then for a play of Sophocles ; and away to sup with Aspasia. I know of no modern university which has so excellent a system of education.

Knowledge thus acquired and opinions thus formed

[1] ——— *καὶ κυσὲ χεῖρας,*
Δεινὰς, ἀνδροφόνους, αἳ οἱ πολέας κτάνον υἷας.

were, indeed, likely to be, in some respects, defective. Propositions which are advanced in discourse generally result from a partial view of the question, and cannot be kept under examination long enough to be corrected. Men of great conversational powers almost universally practise a sort of lively sophistry and exaggeration, which deceives for the moment both themselves and their auditors. Thus we see doctrines which cannot bear a close inspection triumph perpetually in drawing-rooms, in debating societies, and even in legislative or judicial assemblies. To the conversational education of the Athenians I am inclined to attribute the great looseness of reasoning which is remarkable in most of their scientific writings. Even the most illogical of modern writers would stand perfectly aghast at the puerile fallacies which seem to have deluded some of the greatest men of antiquity. Sir Thomas Lethbridge would stare at the political economy of Xenophon ; and the author of *Soirées de Pétersbourg* would be ashamed of some of the metaphysical arguments of Plato. But the very circumstances which retarded the growth of science were peculiarly favorable to the cultivation of eloquence. From the early habit of taking a share in animated discussion the intelligent student would derive that readiness of resource, that copiousness of language, and that knowledge of the temper and understanding of an audience, which are far more valuable to an orator than the greatest logical powers.

Horace has prettily compared poems to those paintings of which the effect varies as the spectator changes his stand. The same remark applies with at least equal justice to speeches. They must be read with the

temper of those to whom they were addressed, or they must necessarily appear to offend against the laws of taste and reason : as the finest picture, seen in a light different from that for which it was designed, will appear fit only for a sign. This is perpetually forgotten by those who criticise oratory. Because they are reading at leisure, pausing at every line, reconsidering every argument, they forget that the hearers were hurried from point to point too rapidly to detect the fallacies through which they were conducted ; that they had no time to disentangle sophisms, or to notice slight inaccuracies of expression; that elaborate excellence, either of reasoning or of language, would have been absolutely thrown away. To recur to the analogy of the sister art, these connoisseurs examine a panorama through a microscope, and quarrel with a scene-painter because he does not give to his work the exquisite finish of Gerard Dow.

Oratory is to be estimated on principles different from those which are applied to other productions. Truth is the object of philosophy and history. Truth is the object even of those works which are peculiarly called works of fiction, but which, in fact, bear the same relation to history which algebra bears to arithmetic. The merit of poetry, in its wildest forms, still consists in its truth—truth conveyed to the understanding, not directly by the words, but circuitously by means of imaginative associations, which serve as its conductors. The object of oratory alone is not truth, but persuasion. The admiration of the multitude does not make Moore a greater poet than Coleridge, or Beattie a greater philosopher than Berkeley. But the criterion of eloquence is different. A speaker who ex-

hausts the whole philosophy of a question, who displays every grace of style, yet produces no effect on his audience, may be a great essayist, a great statesman, a great master of composition ; but he is not an orator. If he miss the mark, it makes no difference whether he have taken aim too high or too low.

The effect of the great freedom of the press in England has been, in a great measure, to destroy this distinction, and to leave among us little of what I call Oratory Proper. Our legislators, our candidates, on great occasions even our advocates, address themselves less to the audience than to the reporters. They think less of the few hearers than of the innumerable readers. At Athens the case was different ; there the only object of the speaker was immediate conviction and persuasion. He, therefore, who would justly appreciate the merit of the Grecian orators should place himself, as nearly as possible, in the situation of their auditors : he should divest himself of his modern feelings and acquirements, and make the prejudices and interests of the Athenian citizen his own. He who studies their works in this spirit will find that many of those things which, to an English reader, appear to be blemishes—the frequent violation of those excellent rules of evidence by which our courts of law are regulated—the introduction of extraneous matter—the reference to considerations of political expediency in judicial investigations—the assertions, without proof—the passionate entreaties—the furious invectives—are really proofs of the prudence and address of the speakers. He must not dwell maliciously on arguments or phrases, but acquiesce in his first impressions. It requires repeated perusal and reflection to decide rightly on any

other portion of literature. But with respect to works of which the merit depends on their instantaneous effect the most hasty judgment is likely to be best.

The history of eloquence at Athens is remarkable. From a very early period great speakers had flourished there. Pisistratus and Themistocles are said to have owed much of their influence to their talents for debate. We learn with more certainty that Pericles was distinguished by extraordinary oratorical powers. The substance of some of his speeches is transmitted to us by Thucydides ; and that excellent writer has doubtless faithfully reported the general line of his arguments. But the manner, which in oratory is of at least as much consequence as the matter, was of no importance to his narration. It is evident that he has not attempted to preserve it. Throughout his work, every speech on every subject, whatever may have been the character or the dialect of the speaker, is in exactly the same form. The grave King of Sparta, the furious demagogue of Athens, the general encouraging his army, the captive supplicating for his life, all are represented as speakers in one unvaried style—a style, moreover, wholly unfit for oratorical purposes. His mode of reasoning is singularly elliptical, in reality most consecutive, yet in appearance often incoherent. His meaning, in itself sufficiently perplexing, is compressed into the fewest possible words. His great fondness for antithetical expression has not a little conduced to this effect. Every one must have observed how much more the sense is condensed in the verses of Pope and his imitators, who never ventured to continue the same clause from couplet to couplet, than in those of poets who allow themselves that license. Every arti-

ficial division, which is strongly marked, and which frequently recurs, has the same tendency. The natural and perspicuous expression which spontaneously rises to the mind will often refuse to accommodate itself to such a form. It is necessary either to expand it into weakness, or to compress it into almost impenetrable density. The latter is generally the choice of an able man, and was assuredly the choice of Thucydides.

It is scarcely necessary to say that such speeches could never have been delivered. They are perhaps among the most difficult passages in the Greek language, and would probably have been scarcely more intelligible to an Athenian auditor than to a modern reader. Their obscurity was acknowledged by Cicero, who was as intimate with the literature and language of Greece as the most accomplished of its natives, and who seems to have held a respectable rank among the Greek authors. Their difficulty to a modern reader lies, not in the words, but in the reasoning. A dictionary is of far less use in studying them than a clear head and a close attention to the context. They are valuable to the scholar as displaying, beyond almost any other compositions, the powers of the finest of languages : they are valuable to the philosopher as illustrating the morals and manners of a most interesting age : they abound in just thought and energetic expression. But they do not enable us to form any accurate opinion on the merits of the early Greek orators.

Though it cannot be doubted that, before the Persian wars, Athens had produced eminent speakers, yet the period during which eloquence most flourished among her citizens was by no means that of her greatest power and glory. It commenced at the close of the Peloponn-

nesian war. In fact, the steps by which Athenian oratory approached to its finished excellence seem to have been almost contemporaneous with those by which the Athenian character and the Athenian empire sunk to degradation. At the time when the little commonwealth achieved those victories which twenty-five eventful centuries have left unequalled, eloquence was in its infancy. The deliverers of Greece became its plunderers and oppressors. Unmeasured exaction, atrocious vengeance, the madness of the multitude, the tyranny of the great, filled the Cyclades with tears, and blood, and mourning. The sword unpeopled whole islands in a day. The plough passed over the ruins of famous cities. The imperial republic sent forth her children by thousands to pine in the quarries of Syracuse, or to feed the vultures of Ægospotami. She was at length reduced by famine and slaughter to humble herself before her enemies, and to purchase existence by the sacrifice of her empire and her laws. During these disastrous and gloomy years, oratory was advancing towards its highest excellence. And it was when the moral, the political, and the military character of the people was most utterly degraded, it was when the viceroy of a Macedonian sovereign gave law to Greece, that the courts of Athens witnessed the most splendid contest of eloquence that the world has ever known.

The causes of this phenomenon it is not, I think, difficult to assign. The division of labor operates on the productions of the orator as it does on those of the mechanic. It was remarked by the ancients that the Pentathlete, who divided his attention between several exercises, though he could not vie with a boxer in the use of the cestus, or with one who had confined his

attention to running in the contest of the stadium, yet enjoyed far greater general vigor and health than either. It is the same with the mind. The superiority in technical skill is often more than compensated by the inferiority in general intelligence. And this is peculiarly the case in politics. States have always been best governed by men who have taken a wide view of public affairs, and who have rather a general acquaintance with many sciences than a perfect mastery of one. The union of the political and military departments in Greece contributed not a little to the splendor of its early history. After their separation more skilful generals and greater speakers appeared ; but the breed of statesmen dwindled and became almost extinct. Themistocles or Pericles would have been no match for Demosthenes in the assembly, or for Iphicrates in the field. But surely they were incomparably better fitted than either for the supreme direction of affairs.

There is, indeed, a remarkable coincidence between the progress of the art of war and that of the art of oratory among the Greeks. They both advanced to perfection by contemporaneous steps, and from similar causes. The early speakers, like the early warriors of Greece, were merely a militia. It was found that in both employments practice and discipline gave superiority.[1] Each pursuit, therefore, became first an

[1] It has often occurred to me, that to the circumstances mentioned in the text is to be referred one of the most remarkable events in Grecian history ; I mean the silent but rapid downfall of the Lacedæmonian power. Soon after the termination of the Peloponnesian war, the strength of Lacedæmon began to decline. Its military discipline, its social institutions, were the same. Agesilaus, during whose reign the change took place, was the ablest of its Kings. Yet the Spartan armies

art, and then a trade. In proportion as the professors of each became more expert in their particular craft, they became less respectable in their general character. Their skill had been obtained at too great expense to be employed only from disinterested views. Thus, the soldiers forgot that they were citizens, and the orators that they were statesmen. I know not to what Demosthenes and his famous contemporaries can be so justly compared as to those mercenary troops who, in their time, overran Greece; or those who, from similar causes, were some centuries ago the scourge of the Italian republics—perfectly acquainted with every part of their profession, irresistible in the field, powerful to defend or to destroy, but defending without love, and destroying without hatred. We may despise the characters of these political *Condottieri;* but it is impossible to examine the system of their tactics without being amazed at its perfection.

were frequently defeated in pitched battles—an occurrence considered impossible in the earlier ages of Greece. They are allowed to have fought most bravely; yet they were no longer attended by the success to which they had formerly been accustomed. No solution of these circumstances is offered, as far as I know, by any ancient author. The real cause, I conceive, was this: the Lacedæmonians, alone among the Greeks, formed a permanent standing army. While the citizens of other commonwealths were engaged in agriculture and trade, they had no employment whatever but the study of military discipline. Hence, during the Persian and Peloponnesian wars, they had that advantage over their neighbors which regular troops always possess over militia. This advantage they lost when other States began, at a later period, to employ mercenary forces, who were probably as superior to them in the art of war as they had hitherto been to their antagonists.

I had intended to proceed to this examination, and to consider separately the remains of Lysias, of Æschines, of Demosthenes, and of Isocrates, who, though strictly speaking he was rather a pamphleteer than an orator, deserves, on many accounts, a place in such a disquisition. The length of my prolegomena and digressions compels me to postpone this part of the subject to another occasion. A Magazine is certainly a delightful invention for a very idle or a very busy man. He is not compelled to complete his plan or to adhere to his subject. He may ramble as far as he is inclined, and stop as soon as he is tired. No one takes the trouble to recollect his contradictory opinions or his unredeemed pledges. He may be as superficial, as inconsistent, and as careless as he chooses. Magazines resemble those little angels who, according to the pretty Rabbinical tradition, are generated every morning by the brook which rolls over the flowers of Paradise, whose life is a song, who warble till sunset, and then sink back without regret into nothingness. Such spirits have nothing to do with the detecting spear of Ithuriel or the victorious sword of Michael. It is enough for them to please and be forgotten.

A PROPHETIC ACCOUNT OF A GRAND NATIONAL EPIC POEM, TO BE ENTITLED "THE WELLINGTONIAD," AND TO BE PUBLISHED A.D. 2824

(November, 1824)

HOW I became a prophet it is not very important to the reader to know. Nevertheless I feel all the anxiety which, under similar circumstances, troubled the sensitive mind of Sidrophel; and, like him, am eager to vindicate myself from the suspicion of having practised forbidden arts or held intercourse with beings of another world. I solemnly declare, therefore, that I never saw a ghost, like Lord Lyttleton; consulted a gypsy, like Josephine; or heard my name pronounced by an absent person, like Dr. Johnson. Though it is now almost as usual for gentlemen to appear at the moment of their death to their friends as to call on them during their life, none of my acquaintance have been so polite as to pay me that customary attention. I have derived my knowledge neither from the dead nor from the living; neither from the lines of a hand, nor from the grounds of a teacup; neither from the stars of the firmament, nor from the fiends of the abyss. I have never, like the Wesley family, heard "that mighty leading angel," who "drew after him the third

part of heaven's sons," scratching in my cupboard. I have never been enticed to sign any of those delusive bonds which have been the ruin of so many poor creatures; and, having always been an indifferent horseman, I have been careful not to venture myself on a broomstick.

My insight into futurity, like that of George Fox the Quaker, and that of our great and philosophic poet, Lord Byron, is derived from simple presentiment. This is a far less artificial process than those which are employed by some others. Yet my predictions will, I believe, be found more correct than theirs, or, at all events, as Sir Benjamin Backbite says in the play, "more circumstantial."

I prophesy, then, that, in the year 2824, according to our present reckoning, a grand national Epic Poem, worthy to be compared with the Iliad, the Æneid, or the Jerusalem, will be published in London.

Men naturally take an interest in the adventures of every eminent writer. I will, therefore, gratify the laudable curiosity which, on this occasion, will doubtless be universal, by prefixing to my account of the poem a concise memoir of the poet.

Richard Quongti will be born at Westminster on the 1st of July, 2786. He will be the younger son of the younger branch of one of the most respectable families in England. He will be lineally descended from Quongti, the famous Chinese liberal, who, after the failure of the heroic attempt of his party to obtain a constitution from the Emperor Fim Fam, will take refuge in England, in the twenty-third century. Here his descendants will obtain considerable note; and one branch of the family will be raised to the peerage.

Richard, however, though destined to exalt his family to distinction far nobler than any which wealth or titles can bestow, will be born to a very scanty fortune. He will display in his early youth such striking talents as will attract the notice of Viscount Quongti, his third cousin, then secretary of state for the Steam Department. At the expense of this eminent nobleman, he will be sent to prosecute his studies at the University of Tombuctoo. To that illustrious seat of the muses all the ingenuous youth of every country will then be attracted by the high scientific character of Professor Quashaboo, and the eminent literary attainments of Professor Kissey Kickey. In spite of this formidable competition, however, Quongti will acquire the highest honors in every department of knowledge, and will obtain the esteem of his associates by his amiable and unaffected manners. The guardians of the young Duke of Carrington, premier peer of England, and the last remaining scion of the ancient and illustrious House of Smith, will be desirous to secure so able an instructor for their ward. With the Duke, Quongti will perform the grand tour, and visit the polished courts of Sydney and Capetown. After prevailing on his pupil, with great difficulty, to subdue a violent and imprudent passion which he had conceived for a Hottentot lady, of great beauty and accomplishments indeed, but of dubious character, he will travel with him to the United States of America. But that tremendous war which will be fatal to American liberty will, at that time, be raging through the whole federation. At New York the travellers will hear of the final defeat and death of the illustrious champion of freedom, Jonathan Higginbottom, and of the elevation of Ebenezer

Hogsflesh to the perpetual Presidency. They will not choose to proceed in a journey which would expose them to the insults of that brutal soldiery, whose cruelty and rapacity will have devastated Mexico and Columbia, and now, at length, enslaved their own country.

On their return to England, A.D. 2810, the death of the Duke will compel his preceptor to seek for a subsistence by literary labors. His fame will be raised by many small productions of considerable merit ; and he will at last obtain a permanent place in the highest class of writers by his great epic poem.

This celebrated work will become, with unexampled rapidity, a popular favorite. The sale will be so beneficial to the author that, instead of going about the dirty streets on his velocipede, he will be enabled to set up his balloon.

The character of this noble poem will be so finely and justly given in the Tombuctoo Review for April, 2825, that I cannot refrain from translating a passage. The author will be our poet's old preceptor, Professor Kissey Kickey.

" In pathos, in splendor of language, in sweetness of versification, Mr. Quongti has long been considered as unrivalled. In his exquisite poem on the *Ornithorynchus paradoxus* all these qualities are displayed in their greatest perfection. How exquisitely does that work arrest and embody the undefined and vague shadows which flit over an imaginative mind. The cold worldling may not comprehend it ; but it will find a response in the bosom of every youthful poet, of every enthusiastic lover, who has seen an *Ornithorynchus paradoxus* by moonlight. But we were yet to learn that he possessed the comprehension, the judg-

ment, and the fertility of mind indispensable to the epic poet.

"It is difficult to conceive a plot more perfect than that of the Wellingtoniad. It is most faithful to the manners of the age to which it relates. It preserves exactly all the historical circumstances, and interweaves them most artfully with all the *speciosa miracula* of supernatural agency."

Thus far the learned Professor of Humanity in the University of Tombuctoo. I fear that the critics of our time will form an opinion diametrically opposite as to these very points. Some will, I fear, be disgusted by the machinery, which is derived from the mythology of ancient Greece. I can only say that, in the twenty-ninth century, that machinery will be universally in use among poets; and that Quongti will use it partly in conformity with the general practice, and partly from a veneration, perhaps excessive, for the great remains of classical antiquity, which will then, as now, be assiduously read by every man of education; though Tom Moore's songs will be forgotten, and only three copies of Lord Byron's works will exist: one in possession of King George the Nineteenth, one in the Duke of Carrington's collection, and one in the library of the British Museum. Finally, should any good people be concerned to hear that Pagan fictions will so long retain their influence over literature, let them reflect that, as the Bishop of St. David's says in his Proofs of the Inspiration of the Sibylline Verses, read at the last meeting of the Royal Society of Literature, "at all events a Pagan is not a Papist."

Some readers of the present day may think that Quongti is by no means entitled to the compliments

which his Negro critic pays him on his adherence to the historical circumstances of the time in which he has chosen his subject ; that, where he introduces any trait of our manners, it is in the wrong place, and that he confounds the customs of our age with those of much more remote periods. I can only say that the charge is infinitely more applicable to Homer, Virgil, and Tasso. If, therefore, the reader should detect, in the following abstract of the plot, any little deviation from strict historical accuracy, let him reflect for a moment whether Agamemnon would not have found as much to censure in the Iliad, Dido in the Æneid, or Godfrey in the Jerusalem. Let him not suffer his opinions to depend on circumstances which cannot possibly affect the truth or falsehood of the representation. If it be impossible for a single man to kill hundreds in battle, the impossibility is not diminished by distance of time. If it be as certain that Rinaldo never disenchanted a forest in Palestine as it is that the Duke of Wellington never disenchanted the forest of Soignies, can we, as rational men, tolerate the one story and ridicule the other ? Of this, at least, I am certain, that whatever excuse we have for admiring the plots of those famous poems, our children will have for extolling that of the Wellingtoniad.

I shall proceed to give a sketch of the narrative. The subject is The Reign of the Hundred Days.

BOOK I

The poem commences, in form, with a solemn proposition of the subject. Then the muse is invoked to give the poet accurate information as to the causes of so terrible a commotion. The answer to this question,

being, it is to be supposed, the joint production of the poet and the muse, ascribes the event to circumstances which have hitherto eluded all the research of political writers, namely, the influence of the god Mars, who, we are told, had some forty years before usurped the conjugal rights of old Carlo Bonaparte, and given birth to Napoleon. By his incitement it was that the emperor with his devoted companions was now on the sea, returning to his ancient dominions. The gods were at present, fortunately for the adventurer, feasting with the Ethiopians, whose entertainments, according to the ancient custom described by Homer, they annually attended, with the same sort of condescending gluttony which now carries the cabinet to Guildhall on the 9th of November. Neptune was, in consequence, absent, and unable to prevent the enemy of his favorite island from crossing his element. Boreas, however, who had his abode on the banks of the Russian ocean, and who, like Thetis in the Iliad, was not of sufficient quality to have an invitation to Ethiopia, resolves to destroy the armament which brings war and danger to his beloved Alexander. He accordingly raises a storm which is most powerfully described. Napoleon bewails the inglorious fate for which he seems to be reserved. "Oh! thrice happy," says he, "those who were frozen to death at Krasnoi, or slaughtered at Leipsic. Oh, Kutusoff, bravest of the Russians, wherefore was I not permitted to fall by thy victorious sword?" He then offers a prayer to Æolus, and vows to him a sacrifice of a black ram. In consequence, the god recalls his turbulent subject, the sea is calmed, and the ship anchors in the port of Frejus. Napoleon and Bertrand, who is always called the faithful Bertrand, land to explore

the country; Mars meets them disguised as a lancer of the guard, wearing the cross of the legion of honor. He advises them to apply for necessaries of all kinds to the governor, shows them the way, and disappears with a strong smell of gunpowder. Napoleon makes a pathetic speech, and enters the governor's house. Here he sees hanging up a fine print of the battle of Austerlitz, himself in the foreground giving his orders. This puts him in high spirits ; he advances and salutes the governor, who receives him most loyally, gives him an entertainment, and, according to the usage of all epic hosts, insists, after dinner, on a full narration of all that has happened to him since the battle of Leipsic.

BOOK II

Napoleon carries his narrative from the battle of Leipsic to his abdication. But, as we shall have a great quantity of fighting on our hands, I think it best to omit the details.

BOOK III

Napoleon describes his sojourn at Elba, and his return ; how he was driven by stress of weather to Sardinia, and fought with the harpies there ; how he was then carried southward to Sicily, where he generously took on board an English sailor, whom a man-of-war had unhappily left there, and who was in imminent danger of being devoured by the Cyclops ; how he landed in the Bay of Naples, saw the Sibyl, and descended to Tartarus ; how he held a long and pathetic conversation with Poniatowski, whom he found wandering unburied on the banks of Styx ; how he swore to give him a splendid funeral ; how he had also an affec-

tionate interview with Desaix ; how Moreau and Sir Ralph Abercrombie fled at the sight of him. He relates that he then re-embarked, and met with nothing of importance till the commencement of the storm with which the poem opens.

BOOK IV

The scene changes to Paris. Fame, in the garb of an express, brings intelligence of the landing of Napoleon. The King performs a sacrifice : but the entrails are unfavorable ; and the victim is without a heart. He prepares to encounter the invader. A young captain of the guard, the son of Maria Antoinette by Apollo, in the shape of a fiddler, rushes in to tell him that Napoleon is approaching with a vast army. The royal forces are drawn out for battle. Full catalogues are given of the regiments on both sides—their colonels, lieutenant-colonels, and uniform.

BOOK V

The King comes forward and defies Napoleon to single combat. Napoleon accepts it. Sacrifices are offered. The ground is measured by Ney and Macdonald. The combatants advance. Louis snaps his pistol in vain. The bullet of Napoleon, on the contrary, carries off the tip of the King's ear. Napoleon then rushes on him sword in hand. But Louis snatches up a stone, such as ten men of those degenerate days will be unable to move, and hurls it against his antagonist. Mars averts it. Napoleon then seizes Louis, and is about to strike a fatal blow, when Bacchus intervenes, like Venus in the third book of the Iliad, bears off the King in a thick cloud, and seats him in a hotel

at Lille, with a bottle of Maraschino and a basin of soup before him. Both armies instantly proclaim Napoleon emperor.

BOOK VI

Neptune, returned from his Ethiopian revels, sees with rage the events which have taken place in Europe. He flies to the cave of Alecto, and drags out the fiend, commanding her to excite universal hostility against Napoleon. The Fury repairs to Lord Castlereagh; and as, when she visited Turnus, she assumed the form of an old woman, she here appears in the kindred shape of Mr. Vansittart, and in an impassioned address exhorts his lordship to war. His lordship, like Turnus, treats this unwonted monitor with great disrespect, tells him that he is an old doting fool, and advises him to look after the ways and means, and leave questions of peace and war to his betters. The Fury then displays all her terrors. The neat powdered hair bristles up into snakes ; the black stockings appear clotted with blood ; and, brandishing a torch, she announces her name and mission. Lord Castlereagh, seized with fury, flies instantly to the Parliament, and recommends war with a torrent of eloquent invective. All the members instantly clamor for vengeance, seize their arms which are hanging round the walls of the house, and rush forth to prepare for instant hostilities.

BOOK VII

In this book intelligence arrives at London of the flight of the Duchess d'Angoulême from France. It is stated that this heroine, armed from head to foot, defended Bordeaux against the adherents of Napoleon,

and that she fought hand to hand with Clausel, and beat him down with an enormous stone. Deserted by her followers, she at last, like Turnus, plunged, armed as she was, into the Garonne, and swum to an English ship which lay off the coast. This intelligence yet more inflames the English to war.

A yet bolder flight than any which has been mentioned follows. The Duke of Wellington goes to take leave of the duchess ; and a scene passes quite equal to the famous interview of Hector and Andromache. Lord Douro is frightened at his father's feather, but begs for his epaulet.

BOOK VIII

Neptune, trembling for the event of the war, implores Venus, who, as the offspring of his element, naturally venerates him, to procure from Vulcan a deadly sword and a pair of unerring pistols for the Duke. They are accordingly made and superbly decorated. The sheath of the sword, like the shield of Achilles, is carved, in exquisitely fine miniature, with scenes from the common life of the period ; a dance at Almack's, a boxing-match at the Fives-court, a lord-mayor's procession, and a man hanging. All these are fully and elegantly described. The Duke thus armed hastens to Brussels.

BOOK IX

The Duke is received at Brussels by the King of the Netherlands with great magnificence. He is informed of the approach of the armies of all the confederate kings. The poet, however, with a laudable zeal for the glory of his country, completely passes over the exploits of the Austrians in Italy, and the discussions

of the congress. England and France, Wellington and Napoleon, almost exclusively occupy his attention. Several days are spent at Brussels in revelry. The English heroes astonish their allies by exhibiting splendid games, similar to those which draw the flower of the British aristocracy to Newmarket and Moulsey Hurst, and which will be considered by our descendants with as much veneration as the Olympian and Isthmian contests by classical students of the present time. In the combat of the cestus, Shaw, the life-guardsman, vanquishes the Prince of Orange, and obtains a bull as a prize. In the horse-race, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Uxbridge ride against each other; the Duke is victorious, and is rewarded with twelve opera-girls. On the last day of the festivities a splendid dance takes place, at which all the heroes attend.

BOOK X

Mars, seeing the English army thus inactive, hastens to rouse Napoleon, who, conducted by Night and Silence, unexpectedly attacks the Prussians. The slaughter is immense. Napoleon kills many whose histories and families are happily particularized. He slays Herman, the craniologist, who dwelt by the linden-shadowed Elbe, and measured with his eye the skulls of all who walked through the streets of Berlin. Alas ! his own skull is now cleft by the Corsican sword. Four pupils of the University of Jena advance together to encounter the Emperor ; at four blows he destroys them all. Blucher rushes to arrest the devastation ; Napoleon strikes him to the ground, and is on the point of killing him, but Gneisenau, Ziethen, Bulow, and all the other heroes of the Prussian army gather

round him, and bear the venerable chief to a distance from the field. The slaughter is continued till night. In the mean time Neptune has despatched Fame to bear the intelligence to the Duke, who is dancing at Brussels. The whole army is put in motion. The Duke of Brunswick's horse speaks to admonish him of his danger, but in vain.

BOOK XI

Picton, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Prince of Orange engage Ney at Quatre Bras. Ney kills the Duke of Brunswick and strips him, sending his belt to Napoleon. The English fall back on Waterloo. Jupiter calls a council of the gods, and commands that none shall interfere on either side. Mars and Neptune make very eloquent speeches. The battle of Waterloo commences. Napoleon kills Picton and Delancy. Ney engages Ponsonby, and kills him. The Prince of Orange is wounded by Soult. Lord Uxbridge flies to check the carnage. He is severely wounded by Napoleon, and only saved by the assistance of Lord Hill. In the mean time the Duke makes a tremendous carnage among the French. He encounters General Duhesme, and vanquishes him, but spares his life. He kills Toubert, who kept the gaming-house in the Palais Royal, and Maronet, who loved to spend whole nights in drinking champagne. Clerval, who had been hooted from the stage, and had then become a captain in the Imperial Guard, wished that he had still continued to face the more harmless enmity of the Parisian pit. But Larrey, the son of Esculapius, whom his father had instructed in all the secrets of his art, and who was surgeon-general of the French army, embraced the

knees of the destroyer, and conjured him not to give death to one whose office it was to give life. The Duke raised him, and bade him live.

But we must hasten to the close. Napoleon rushes to encounter Wellington. Both armies stand in mute amaze. The heroes fire their pistols; that of Napoleon misses, but that of Wellington, formed by the hand of Vulcan, and primed by the Cyclops, wounds the emperor in the thigh. He flies, and takes refuge among his troops. The flight becomes promiscuous. The arrival of the Prussians, from a motive of patriotism, the poet completely passes over.

BOOK XII

Things are now hastening to the catastrophe. Napoleon flies to London, and, seating himself on the hearth of the Regent, embraces the household gods, and conjures him, by the venerable age of George III., and by the opening perfections of the Princess Charlotte, to spare him. The Prince is inclined to do so; when, looking on his breast, he sees there the belt of the Duke of Brunswick. He instantly draws his sword, and is about to stab the destroyer of his kinsman. Piety and hospitality, however, restrain his hand. He takes a middle course, and condemns Napoleon to be exposed on a desert island. The King of France re-enters Paris; and the poem concludes.

ON MITFORD'S HISTORY OF GREECE

(November, 1824)

THIS is a book which enjoys a great and increasing popularity; but, while it has attracted a considerable share of the public attention, it has been little noticed by the critics. Mr. Mitford has almost succeeded in mounting, unperceived by those whose office it is to watch such aspirants, to a high place among historians. He has taken a seat on the dais without being challenged by a single seneschal. To oppose the progress of his fame is now almost a hopeless enterprise. Had he been reviewed with candid severity when he had published only his first volume, his work would either have deserved its reputation, or would never have obtained it. "Then," as Indra says of Kehama—"then was the time to strike." The time was neglected; and the consequence is that Mr. Mitford, like Kehama, has laid his victorious hand on the literary Amreeta, and seems about to taste the precious elixir of immortality. I shall venture to emulate the courage of the honest Glendoveer—

> "When now
> He saw the Amreeta in Kehama's hand,
> An impulse that defied all self-command,

> In that extremity,
> Stung him, and he resolved to seize the cup,
> And dare the Rajah's force in Seeva's sight.
> Forward he sprung to tempt the unequal fray."

In plain words, I shall offer a few considerations, which may tend to reduce an overpraised writer to his proper level.

The principal characteristic of this historian, the origin of his excellences and his defects, is a love of singularity. He has no notion of going with a multitude to do either good or evil. An exploded opinion, or an unpopular person, has an irresistible charm for him. The same perverseness may be traced in his diction. His style would never have been elegant; but it might at least have been manly and perspicuous; and nothing but the most elaborate care could possibly have made it so bad as it is. It is distinguished by harsh phrases, strange collocations, occasional solecisms, frequent obscurity, and, above all, by a peculiar oddity, which can no more be described than it can be overlooked. Nor is this all. Mr. Mitford piques himself on spelling better than any of his neighbors; and this not only in ancient names, which he mangles in defiance both of custom and of reason, but in the most ordinary words of the English language. It is in itself a matter perfectly indifferent whether we call a foreigner by the name which he bears in his own language, or by that which corresponds to it in ours; whether we say Lorenzo de Medici, or Lawrence de Medici, Jean Chauvin, or John Calvin. In such cases established usage is considered as law by all writers except Mr. Mitford. If he were always consistent with himself, he might be excused for sometimes disagreeing with

his neighbors; but he proceeds on no principle but that of being unlike the rest of the world. Every child has heard of Linnæus; therefore Mr. Mitford calls him Linné: Rousseau is known all over Europe as Jean Jacques; therefore Mr. Mitford bestows on him the strange appellation of John James.

Had Mr. Mitford undertaken a history of any other country than Greece, this propensity would have rendered his work useless and absurd. His occasional remarks on the affairs of ancient Rome and of modern Europe are full of errors; but he writes of times with respect to which almost every other writer has been in the wrong; and therefore, by resolutely deviating from his predecessors, he is often in the right.

Almost all the modern historians of Greece have shown the grossest ignorance of the most obvious phenomena of human nature. In their representations the generals and statesmen of antiquity are absolutely divested of all individuality. They are personifications; they are passions, talents, opinions, virtues, vices, but not men. Inconsistency is a thing of which these writers have no notion. That a man may have been liberal in his youth and avaricious in his age, cruel to one enemy and merciful to another, is to them utterly inconceivable. If the facts be undeniable, they suppose some strange and deep design, in order to explain what, as every one who has observed his own mind knows, needs no explanation at all. This is a mode of writing very acceptable to the multitude, who have always been accustomed to make gods and demons out of men very little better or worse than themselves; but it appears contemptible to all who have watched the changes of human character—to all who have ob-

served the influence of time, of circumstances, and of associates on mankind—to all who have seen a hero in the gout, a democrat in the Church, a pedant in love, or a philosopher in liquor. This practice of painting in nothing but black and white is unpardonable even in the drama. It is the great fault of Alfieri ; and how much it injures the effect of his compositions will be obvious to every one who will compare his Rosmunda with the Lady Macbeth of Shakspeare. The one is a wicked woman ; the other is a fiend. Her only feeling is hatred ; all her words are curses. We are at once shocked and fatigued by the spectacle of such raving cruelty, excited by no provocation, repeatedly changing its object, and constant in nothing but in its inextinguishable thirst for blood.

In history this error is far more disgraceful. Indeed, there is no fault which so completely ruins a narrative in the opinion of a judicious reader. We know that the line of demarcation between good and bad men is so faintly marked as often to elude the most careful investigation of those who have the best opportunities for judging. Public men, above all, are surrounded with so many temptations and difficulties that some doubt must almost always hang over their real dispositions and intentions. The lives of Pym, Cromwell, Monk, Clarendon, Marlborough, Burnet, Walpole, are well known to us. We are acquainted with their actions, their speeches, their writings ; we have abundance of letters and well-authenticated anecdotes relating to them : yet what candid man will venture very positively to say which of them were honest and which of them were dishonest men. It appears easier to pronounce decidedly upon the great characters of

antiquity, not because we have greater means of discovering truth, but simply because we have less means of detecting error. The modern historians of Greece have forgotten this. Their heroes and villains are as consistent in all their sayings and doings as the cardinal virtues and the deadly sins in an allegory. We should as soon expect a good action from giant Slaygood in Bunyan as from Dionysius; and a crime of Epaminondas would seem as incongruous as a *faux-pas* of the grave and comely damsel, called Discretion, who answered the bell at the door of the house Beautiful.

This error was partly the cause and partly the effect of the high estimation in which the later ancient writers have been held by modern scholars. Those French and English authors who have treated of the affairs of Greece have generally turned with contempt from the simple and natural narrations of Thucydides and Xenophon to the extravagant representations of Plutarch, Diodorus, Curtius, and other romancers of the same class—men who described military operations without ever having handled a sword, and applied to the seditions of little republics speculations formed by observations on an empire which covered half the known world. Of liberty they knew nothing. It was to them a great mystery, a superhuman enjoyment. They ranted about liberty and patriotism, from the same cause which leads monks to talk more ardently than other men about love and women. A wise man values political liberty because it secures the persons and the possessions of citizens; because it tends to prevent the extravagance of rulers, and the corruption of judges; because it gives birth to useful sciences and elegant arts; because it excites the industry and increases the

comforts of all classes of society. These theorists imagined that it possessed something eternally and intrinsically good, distinct from the blessings which it generally produced. They considered it not as a means but as an end ; an end to be attained at any cost. Their favorite heroes are those who have sacrificed, for the mere name of freedom, the prosperity—the security—the justice—from which freedom derives its value.

There is another remarkable characteristic of these writers, in which their modern worshippers have carefully imitated them—a great fondness for good stories. The most established facts, dates, and characters are never suffered to come into competition with a splendid saying or a romantic exploit. The early historians have left us natural and simple descriptions of the great events which they witnessed, and the great men with whom they associated. When we read the account which Plutarch and Rollin have given of the same period, we scarcely know our old acquaintance again ; we are utterly confounded by the melodramatic effect of the narration, and the sublime coxcombry of the characters.

These are the principal errors into which the predecessors of Mr. Mitford have fallen ; and from most of these he is free. His faults are of a completely different description. It is to be hoped that the students of history may now be saved, like Dorax in Dryden's play, by swallowing two conflicting poisons, each of which may serve as an antidote to the other.

The first and most important difference between Mr. Mitford and those who have preceded him is in his narration. Here the advantage lies, for the most part,

on his side. His principle is to follow the contemporary historians, to look with doubt on all statements which are not in some degree confirmed by them, and absolutely to reject all which are contradicted by them. While he retains the guidance of some writer in whom he can place confidence, he goes on excellently. When he loses it, he falls to the level, or perhaps below the level, of the writers whom he so much despises : he is as absurd as they, and very much duller. It is really amusing to observe how he proceeds with his narration when he has no better authority than poor Diodorus. He is compelled to relate something ; yet he believes nothing. He accompanies every fact with a long statement of objections. His account of the administration of Dionysius is in no sense a history. It ought to be entitled " Historic doubts as to certain events, alleged to have taken place in Sicily."

This scepticism, however, like that of some great legal characters almost as sceptical as himself, vanishes whenever his political partialities interfere. He is a vehement admirer of tyranny and oligarchy, and considers no evidence as feeble which can be brought forward in favor of those forms of government. Democracy he hates with a perfect hatred, a hatred which, in the first volume of his history, appears only in his episodes and reflections, but which, in those parts where he has less reverence for his guides, and can venture to take his own way, completely distorts even his narration.

In taking up these opinions, I have no doubt that Mr. Mitford was influenced by the same love of singularity which led him to spell *island* without an *s*, and to place two dots over the last letter of *idea*. In truth, preceding historians have erred so monstrously on the

other side that even the worst parts of Mr. Mitford's book may be useful as a corrective. For a young gentleman who talks much about his country, tyrannicide, and Epaminondas, this work, diluted in a sufficient quantity of Rollin and Barthelemi, may be a very useful remedy.

The errors of both parties arise from an ignorance or a neglect of the fundamental principle of political science. The writers on one side imagine popular government to be always a blessing ; Mr. Mitford omits no opportunity of assuring us that it is always a curse. The fact is, that a good government, like a good coat, is that which fits the body for which it is designed. A man who, upon abstract principles, pronounces a constitution to be good, without an exact knowledge of the people who are to be governed by it, judges as absurdly as a tailor who should measure the Belvidere Apollo for the clothes of all his customers. The demagogues who wished to see Portugal a republic, and the wise critics who revile the Virginians for not having instituted a peerage, appear equally ridiculous to all men of sense and candor.

That is the best government which desires to make the people happy, and knows how to make them happy. Neither the inclination nor the knowledge will suffice alone ; and it is difficult to find them together.

Pure democracy, and pure democracy alone, satisfies the former condition of this great problem. That the governors may be solicitous only for the interests of the governed, it is necessary that the interests of the governors and the governed should be the same. This cannot be often the case where power is intrusted to one or to a few. The privileged part of the community

will doubtless derive a certain degree of advantage from the general prosperity of the State ; but they will derive a greater from oppression and exaction. The King will desire a useless war for his glory, or a *parc-aux-cerfs* for his pleasure. The nobles will demand monopolies and *lettres-de-cachet.* In proportion as the number of governors is increased the evil is diminished. There are fewer to contribute, and more to receive. The dividend which each can obtain of the public plunder becomes less and less tempting. But the interests of the subjects and the rulers never absolutely coincide till the subjects themselves become the rulers ; that is, till the government be either immediately or mediately democratical.

But this is not enough. "Will without power," said the sagacious Casimir to Milor Beefington, "is like children playing at soldiers." The people will always be desirous to promote their own interests ; but it may be doubted whether, in any community, they were ever sufficiently educated to understand them. Even in this island, where the multitude have long been better informed than in any other part of Europe, the rights of the many have generally been asserted against themselves by the patriotism of the few. Free-trade, one of the greatest blessings which a government can confer on a people, is in almost every country unpopular. It may be well doubted whether a liberal policy with regard to our commercial relations would find any support from a Parliament elected by universal suffrage. The republicans on the other side of the Atlantic have recently adopted regulations of which the consequences will, before long, show us,

"How nations sink, by darling schemes oppressed,
When vengeance listens to the fool's request."

The people are to be governed for their own good; and, that they may be governed for their own good, they must not be governed by their own ignorance. There are countries in which it would be as absurd to establish popular government as to abolish all the restraints in a school, or to untie all the strait-waistcoats in a mad-house.

Hence it may be concluded that the happiest state of society is that in which supreme power resides in the whole body of a well-informed people. This is an imaginary, perhaps an unattainable, state of things. Yet, in some measure, we may approximate to it; and he alone deserves the name of a great statesman whose principle it is to extend the power of the people in proportion to the extent of their knowledge, and to give them every facility for obtaining such a degree of knowledge as may render it safe to trust them with absolute power. In the mean time, it is dangerous to praise or condemn constitutions in the abstract; since, from the despotism of St. Petersburg to the democracy of Washington, there is scarcely a form of government which might not, at least in some hypothetical case, be the best possible.

If, however, there be any form of government which in all ages and all nations has always been, and must always be, pernicious, it is certainly that which Mr. Mitford, on his usual principle of being wiser than all the rest of the world, has taken under his especial patronage—pure oligarchy. This is closely, and indeed

inseparably, connected with another of his eccentric tastes, a marked partiality for Lacedæmon, and a dislike of Athens. Mr. Mitford's book has, I suspect, rendered these sentiments in some degree popular; and I shall, therefore, examine them at some length.

The shades in the Athenian character strike the eye more rapidly than those in the Lacedæmonian; not because they are darker, but because they are on a brighter ground. The law of ostracism is an instance of this. Nothing can be conceived more odious than the practice of punishing a citizen, simply and professedly, for his eminence; and nothing in the institutions of Athens is more frequently or more justly censured. Lacedæmon was free from this. And why? Lacedæmon did not need it. Oligarchy is an ostracism of itself; an ostracism not occasional, but permanent —not dubious, but certain. Her laws prevented the development of merit, instead of attacking its maturity. They did not cut down the plant in its high and palmy state, but cursed the soil with eternal sterility. In spite of the law of ostracism, Athens produced, within a hundred and fifty years, the greatest public men that ever existed. Whom had Sparta to ostracize? She produced, at most, four eminent men—Brasidas, Gylippus, Lysander, and Agesilaus. Of these, not one rose to distinction within her jurisdiction. It was only when they escaped from the region within which the influence of aristocracy withered everything good and noble, it was only when they ceased to be Lacedæmonians, that they became great men. Brasidas, among the cities of Thrace, was strictly a democratical leader, the favorite minister and general of the people. The same may be said of Gylippus at Syracuse. Ly-

sander, in the Hellespont, and Agesilaus, in Asia, were liberated for a time from the hateful restraints imposed by the constitution of Lycurgus. Both acquired fame abroad; and both returned to be watched and depressed at home. This is not peculiar to Sparta. Oligarchy, wherever it has existed, has always stunted the growth of genius. Thus it was at Rome till about a century before the Christian era : we read of abundance of consuls and dictators who won battles and enjoyed triumphs ; but we look in vain for a single man of the first order of intellect—for a Pericles, a Demosthenes, or a Hannibal. The Gracchi formed a strong democratical party ; Marius revived it ; the foundations of the old aristocracy were shaken ; and two generations fertile in really great men appeared.

Venice is a still more remarkable instance : in her history we see nothing but the State : aristocracy had destroyed every seed of genius and virtue. Her dominion was like herself, lofty and magnificent, but founded on filth and weeds. God forbid that there should ever again exist a powerful and civilized state which, after existing through thirteen hundred eventful years, shall not bequeath to mankind the memory of one great name or one generous action.

Many writers, and Mr. Mitford among the number, have admired the stability of the Spartan institutions ; in fact, there is little to admire, and less to approve. Oligarchy is the weakest and the most stable of governments ; and it is stable because it is weak. It has a sort of valetudinarian longevity ; it lives in the balance of Sanctorius ; it takes no exercise, it exposes itself to no accident ; it is seized with an hypochondriac alarm at every new sensation ; it trembles at every breath ;

it lets blood for every inflammation : and thus, without ever enjoying a day of health or pleasure, drags on its existence to a doting and debilitated old age.

The Spartans purchased for their government a prolongation of its existence by the sacrifice of happiness at home and dignity abroad. They cringed to the powerful ; they trampled on the weak ; they massacred their Helots; they betrayed their allies; they contrived to be a day too late for the battle of Marathon ; they attempted to avoid the battle of Salamis ; they suffered the Athenians, to whom they owed their lives and liberties, to be a second time driven from their country by the Persians, that they might finish their own fortifications on the Isthmus ; they attempted to take advantage of the distress to which exertions in their cause had reduced their preservers, in order to make them their slaves ; they strove to prevent those who had abandoned their walls to defend them, from rebuilding them to defend themselves ; they commenced the Peloponnesian war in violation of their engagements with Athens ; they abandoned it in violation of their engagements with their allies ; they gave up to the sword whole cities which had placed themselves under their protection ; they bartered, for advantages confined to themselves, the interest, the freedom, and the lives of those who had served them most faithfully; they took with equal complacency, and equal infamy, the stripes of Elis and the bribes of Persia ; they never showed either resentment or gratitude ; they abstained from no injury ; and they revenged none. Above all, they looked on a citizen who served them well as their deadliest enemy. These are the arts which protract the existence of governments.

Nor were the domestic institutions of Lacedæmon less hateful or less contemptible than her foreign policy. A perpetual interference with every part of the system of human life, a constant struggle against nature and reason, characterized all her laws. To violate even prejudices which have taken deep root in the minds of a people is scarcely expedient ; to think of extirpating natural appetites and passions is frantic : the external symptoms may be occasionally repressed ; but the feeling still exists, and, debarred from its natural objects, preys on the disordered mind and body of its victim. Thus it is in convents ; thus it is among ascetic sects ; thus it was among the Lacedæmonians. Hence arose that madness, or violence approaching to madness, which, in spite of every external restraint, often appeared among the most distinguished citizens of Sparta. Cleomenes terminated his career of raving cruelty by cutting himself to pieces. Pausanias seems to have been absolutely insane : he formed a hopeless and profligate scheme ; he betrayed it by the ostentation of his behavior, and the imprudence of his measures ; and he alienated, by his insolence, all who might have served or protected him. Xenophon, a warm admirer of Lacedæmon, furnishes us with the strongest evidence to this effect. It is impossible not to observe the brutal and senseless fury which characterizes almost every Spartan with whom he was connected. Clearchus nearly lost his life by his cruelty. Chirisophus deprived his army of the services of a faithful guide by his unreasonable and ferocious severity. But it is needless to multiply instances. Lycurgus, Mr. Mitford's favorite legislator, founded his whole system on a mistaken principle. He never considered that gov-

ernments were made for men, and not men for governments. Instead of adapting the constitution to the people, he distorted the minds of the people to suit the constitution, a scheme worthy of the Laputan Academy of Projectors. And this appears to Mr. Mitford to constitute his peculiar title to admiration. Hear himself: "What to modern eyes most strikingly sets that extraordinary man above all other legislators is, that in so many circumstances, apparently out of the reach of law, he controlled and formed to his own mind the wills and habits of his people." I should suppose that this gentleman had the advantage of receiving his education under the ferula of Dr. Pangloss; for his metaphysics are clearly those of the castle of Thunderten-tronckh: "Remarquez bien que les nez ont été faits pour porter des lunettes, aussi avons nous des lunettes. Les jambes sont visiblement instituées pour être chaussées, et nous avons des chausses. Les cochons étant faits pour être mangés, nous mangeons du porc toute l'année."

At Athens the laws did not constantly interfere with the tastes of the people. The children were not taken from their parents by that universal step-mother, the State. They were not starved into thieves, or tortured into bullies; there was no established table at which every one must dine, no established style in which every one must converse. An Athenian might eat whatever he could afford to buy, and talk as long as he could find people to listen. The government did not tell the people what opinions they were to hold, or what songs they were to sing. Freedom produced excellence. Thus philosophy took its origin. Thus were produced those models of poetry, of oratory, and of the arts, which scarcely fall short of the standard of ideal

excellence. Nothing is more conducive to happiness than the free exercise of the mind in pursuits congenial to it. This happiness, assuredly, was enjoyed far more at Athens than at Sparta. The Athenians are acknowledged even by their enemies to have been distinguished in private life by their courteous and amiable demeanor. Their levity, at least, was better than Spartan sullenness, and their impertinence than Spartan insolence. Even in courage it may be questioned whether they were inferior to the Lacedæmonians. The great Athenian historian has reported a remarkable observation of the great Athenian minister. Pericles maintained that his countrymen, without submitting to the hardships of a Spartan education, rivalled all the achievements of Spartan valor, and that therefore the pleasures and amusements which they enjoyed were to be considered as so much clear gain. The infantry of Athens was certainly not equal to that of Lacedæmon; but this seems to have been caused merely by want of practice; the attention of the Athenians was diverted from the discipline of the phalanx to that of the trireme. The Lacedæmonians, in spite of all their boasted valor, were, from the same cause, timid and disorderly in naval action.

But we are told that crimes of great enormity were perpetrated by the Athenian government, and the democracies under its protection. It is true that Athens too often acted up to the full extent of the laws of war, in an age when those laws had not been mitigated by causes which have operated in later times. This accusation is, in fact, common to Athens, to Lacedæmon, to all the states of Greece, and to all states similarly situated. Where communities are very large, the

heavier evils of war are felt but by few. The plough-boy sings, the spinning-wheel turns round, the wedding-day is fixed, whether the last battle were lost or won. In little states it cannot be thus ; every man feels in his own property and person the effect of a war. Every man is a soldier, and a soldier fighting for his nearest interests. His own trees have been cut down, his own corn has been burned, his own house has been pillaged, his own relations have been killed. How can he entertain towards the enemies of his country the same feelings with one who has suffered nothing from them, except perhaps the addition of a small sum to the taxes which he pays. Men in such circumstances cannot be generous. They have too much at stake. It is when they are, if I may so express myself, playing for love ; it is when war is a mere game at chess ; it is when they are contending for a remote colony, a frontier town, the honors of a flag, a salute, or a title, that they can make fine speeches, and do good offices to their enemies. The Black Prince waited behind the chair of his captive ; Villars interchanged repartees with Eugene ; George II. sent congratulations to Louis XV., during a war, upon occasion of his escape from the attempt of Damien ; and these things are fine and generous, and very gratifying to the author of the Broad Stone of Honor, and all the other wise men who think, like him, that God made the world only for the use of gentlemen. But they spring in general from utter heartlessness. No war ought ever to be undertaken but under circumstances which render all interchange of courtesy between the combatants impossible. It is a bad thing that men should hate each other ; but it is far worse that they should contract the habit of cutting

one another's throats without hatred. War is never lenient but where it is wanton ; when men are compelled to fight in self-defence, they must hate and avenge : this may be bad ; but it is human nature ; it is the clay as it came from the hand of the potter.

It is true that among the dependencies of Athens seditions assumed a character more ferocious than even in France during the reign of terror—the accursed Saturnalia of an accursed bondage. It is true that in Athens itself, where such convulsions were scarcely known, the condition of the higher orders was disagreeable ; that they were compelled to contribute large sums for the service or the amusement of the public ; and that they were sometimes harassed by vexatious informers. Whenever such cases occur, Mr. Mitford's scepticism vanishes. The " if," the " but," the " it is said," the " if we may believe," with which he qualifies every charge against a tyrant or an aristocracy, are at once abandoned. The blacker the story, the firmer is his belief ; and he never fails to inveigh with hearty bitterness against democracy as the source of every species of crime.

The Athenians, I believe, possessed more liberty than was good for them. Yet I will venture to assert that, while the splendor, the intelligence, and the energy of that great people were peculiar to themselves, the crimes with which they are charged arose from causes which were common to them with every other state which then existed. The violence of faction in that age sprung from a cause which has always been fertile in every political and moral evil, domestic slavery.

The effect of slavery is completely to dissolve the

connection which naturally exists between the higher and lower classes of free citizens. The rich spend their wealth in purchasing and maintaining slaves. There is no demand for the labor of the poor; the fable of Menenius ceases to be applicable; the belly comunicates no nutriment to the members; there is an atrophy in the body politic. The two parties, therefore, proceed to extremities utterly unknown in countries where they have mutually need of each other. In Rome the oligarchy was too powerful to be subverted by force; and neither the tribunes nor the popular assemblies though constitutionally omnipotent, could maintain a successful contest against men who possessed the whole property of the State. Hence the necessity for measures tending to unsettle the whole frame of society, and to take away every motive of industry; the abolition of debts, and the agrarian laws—propositions absurdly condemned by men who do not consider the circumstances from which they sprung. They were the desperate remedies of a desperate disease. In Greece the oligarchical interest was not in general so deeply rooted as at Rome. The multitude, therefore, often redressed by force grievances which at Rome were commonly attacked under the forms of the constitution. They drove out or massacred the rich, and divided their property. If the superior union or military skill of the rich rendered them victorious, they took measures equally violent, disarmed all in whom they could not confide, often slaughtered great numbers, and occasionally expelled the whole commonalty from the city, and remained, with their slaves, the sole inhabitants.

From such calamities Athens and Lacedæmon alone were almost completely free. At Athens the purses of

the rich were laid under regular contribution for the support of the poor ; and this, rightly considered, was as much a favor to the givers as to the receivers, since no other measure could possibly have saved their houses from pillage and their persons from violence. It is singular that Mr. Mitford should perpetually reprobate a policy which was the best that could be pursued in such a state of things, and which alone saved Athens from the frightful outrages which were perpetrated at Corcyra.

Lacedæmon, cursed with a system of slavery more odious than has ever existed in any other country, avoided this evil by almost totally annihilating private property. Lycurgus began by an agrarian law. He abolished all professions except that of arms ; he made the whole of his community a standing army, every member of which had a common right to the services of a crowd of miserable bondmen ; he secured the State from sedition at the expense of the Helots. Of all the parts of his system this is the most creditable to his head, and the most disgraceful to his heart.

These considerations, and many others of equal importance, Mr. Mitford has neglected ; but he has yet a heavier charge to answer. He made not only illogical inferences, but false statements. While he never states, without qualifications and objections, the charges which the earliest and best historians have brought against his favorite tyrants—Pisistratus, Hippias, and Gelon—he transcribes, without any hesitation, the grossest abuse of the least authoritative writers against every democracy and every demagogue. Such an accusation should not be made without being supported ; and I will, therefore, select one out of many passages which

will fully substantiate the charge, and convict Mr. Mitford of wilful misrepresentation, or of negligence scarcely less culpable. Mr. Mitford is speaking of one of the greatest men that ever lived, Demosthenes, and comparing him with his rival, Æschines. Let him speak for himself.

"In earliest youth Demosthenes earned an opprobrious nickname by the effeminacy of his dress and manner." Does Mr. Mitford know that Demosthenes denied this charge, and explained the nickname in a perfectly different manner?[1] And, if he knew it, should he not have stated it? He proceeds thus:—"On emerging from minority, by the Athenian law, at five-and-twenty, he earned another opprobrious nickname by a prosecution of his guardians, which was considered as a dishonorable attempt to extort money from them." In the first place, Demosthenes was not five-and-twenty years of age. Mr. Mitford might have learned, from so common a book as the Achæologia of Archbishop Potter, that at twenty Athenian citizens were freed from the control of their guardians, and began to manage their own property. The very speech of Demosthenes against his guardians proves most satisfactorily that he was under twenty. In his speech against Midias, he says that when he undertook that prosecution he was quite a boy.[2] His youth might, therefore, excuse the step, even if it had been considered, as Mr. Mitford says, a dishonorable attempt to extort money. But who considered it as such? Not the judges, who condemned the guardians. The Athenian courts of justice were not the purest in the world; but their de-

[1] See the speech of Æschines against Timarchus.

[2] *Μειρακυλλιον ὢν κομιδῇ.*

cisions were at least as likely to be just as the abuse of a deadly enemy. Mr. Mitford refers for confirmation of his statement to Æschines and Plutarch. Æschines by no means bears him out ; and Plutarch directly contradicts him. "Not long after," says Mr. Mitford, "he took blows publicly in the theater" (I preserve the orthography, if it can be so called, of this historian) "from a petulant youth of rank, named Meidias." Here are two disgraceful mistakes. In the first place, it was long after ; eight years at the very least, probably much more. In the next place, the petulant youth, of whom Mr. Mitford speaks, was fifty years old.[1] Really Mr. Mitford has less reason to censure the carelessness of his predecessors than to reform his own. After this monstrous inaccuracy with regard to facts, we may be able to judge what degree of credit ought to be given to the vague abuse of such a writer. "The cowardice of Demosthenes in the field afterwards became notorious." Demosthenes was a civil character ; war was not his business. In his time the division between military and political offices was beginning to be strongly marked ; yet the recollection of the days when every citizen was a soldier was still recent. In such states of society a certain degree of disrepute always attaches to sedentary men; but that any leader of the Athenian democracy could have been, as Mr. Mitford says of Demosthenes, a few lines before, remarkable for "an extraordinary deficiency of personal courage," is absolutely impossible. What

[1] Whoever will read the speech of Demosthenes against Midias will find the statements in the text confirmed, and will have, moreover, the pleasure of becoming acquainted with one of the finest compositions in the world.

mercenary warrior of the time exposed his life to greater or more constant perils? Was there a single soldier at Chæronea who had more cause to tremble for his safety than the orator, who, in case of defeat, could scarcely hope for mercy from the people whom he had misled or the prince whom he had opposed? Were not the ordinary fluctuations of popular feeling enough to deter any coward from engaging in political conflicts? Isocrates, whom Mr. Mitford extols, because he constantly employed all the flowers of his school-boy rhetoric to decorate oligarchy and tyranny, avoided the judicial and political meetings of Athens from mere timidity, and seems to have hated democracy only because he durst not look a popular assembly in the face. Demosthenes was a man of a feeble constitution: his nerves were weak, but his spirit was high; and the energy and enthusiasm of his feelings supported him through life and in death.

So much for Demosthenes. Now for the orator of aristocracy. I do not wish to abuse Æschines. He may have been an honest man. He was certainly a great man; and I feel a reverence, of which Mr. Mitford seems to have no notion, for great men of either party. But, when Mr. Mitford says that the private character of Æschines was without stain, does he remember what Æschines has himself confessed in his speech against Timarchus? I can make allowances, as well as Mr. Mitford, for persons who lived under a different system of laws and morals; but let them be made impartially. If Demosthenes is to be attacked on account of some childish improprieties, proved only by the assertion of an antagonist, what shall we say of those maturer vices which that antagonist has himself

acknowledged? "Against the private character of Æschines," says Mr. Mitford, "Demosthenes seems not to have had an insinuation to oppose." Has Mr. Mitford ever read the speech of Demosthenes on the Embassy? Or can he have forgotten, what was never forgotten by any one else who ever read it, the story which Demosthenes relates with such terrible energy of language concerning the drunken brutality of his rival? True or false, here is something more than an insinuation; and nothing can vindicate the historian who has overlooked it from the charge of negligence or partiality. But Æschines denied the story. And did not Demosthenes also deny the story respecting his childish nickname, which Mr. Mitford has nevertheless told without any qualification? But the judges, or some part of them, showed, by their clamor, their disbelief of the relation of Demosthenes. And did not the judges, who tried the cause between Demosthenes and his guardians, indicate, in a much clearer manner, their approbation of the prosecution? But Demosthenes was a demagogue, and is to be slandered. Æschines was an aristocrat, and is to be panegyrized. Is this a history, or a party-pamphlet?

These passages, all selected from a single page of Mr. Mitford's work, may give some notion to those readers, who have not the means of comparing his statements with the original authorities, of his extreme partiality and carelessness. Indeed, whenever this historian mentions Demosthenes, he violates all the laws of candor and even of decency; he weighs no authorities; he makes no allowances; he forgets the best authenticated facts in the history of the times, and the most generally recognized principles of human

nature. The opposition of the great orator to the policy of Philip he represents as neither more nor less than deliberate villany. I hold almost the same opinion with Mr. Mitford respecting the character and the views of that great and accomplished prince. But am I, therefore, to pronounce Demosthenes profligate and insincere? Surely not. Do we not perpetually see men of the greatest talents and the purest intentions misled by national or factious prejudices? The most respectable people in England were, little more than forty years ago, in the habit of uttering the bitterest abuse against Washington and Franklin. It is certainly to be regretted that men should err so grossly in their estimate of character. But no person who knows anything of human nature will impute such errors to depravity.

Mr. Mitford is not more consistent with himself than with reason. Though he is the advocate of all oligarchies, he is also a warm admirer of all kings, and of all citizens who raised themselves to that species of sovereignty which the Greeks denominated tyranny. If monarchy, as Mr. Mitford holds, be in itself a blessing, democracy must be a better form of government than aristocracy, which is always opposed to the supremacy, and even to the eminence, of individuals. On the other hand, it is but one step that separates the demagogue and the sovereign.

If this article had not extended itself to so great a length, I should offer a few observations on some other peculiarities of this writer—his general preference of the Barbarians to the Greeks—his predilection for Persians, Carthaginians, Thracians, for all nations, in short, except that great and enlightened nation of

which he is the historian. But I will confine myself to a single topic.

Mr. Mitford has remarked, with truth and spirit, that "any history perfectly written, but especially a Grecian history perfectly written, should be a political institute for all nations." It has not occurred to him that a Grecian history, perfectly written, should also be a complete record of the rise and progress of poetry, philosophy, and the arts. Here his work is extremely deficient. Indeed, though it may seem a strange thing to say of a gentleman who has published so many quartos, Mr. Mitford seems to entertain a feeling bordering on contempt for literary and speculative pursuits. The talents of action almost exclusively attract his notice; and he talks with very complacent disdain of "the idle learned." Homer, indeed, he admires; but principally, I am afraid, because he is convinced that Homer could neither read nor write. He could not avoid speaking of Socrates; but he has been far more solicitous to trace his death to political causes, and to deduce from it consequences unfavorable to Athens and to popular governments, than to throw light on the character and doctrines of the wonderful man,

> "From whose mouth issued forth
> Mellifluous streams that watered all the schools
> Of Academics, old and new, with those
> Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect
> Epicurean, and the Stoic severe."

He does not seem to be aware that Demosthenes was a great orator; he represents him sometimes as an aspiring demagogue, sometimes as an adroit negotiator, and

always as a great rogue. But that in which the Athenian excelled all men of all ages, that irresistible eloquence, which at the distance of more than two thousand years stirs our blood, and brings tears into our eyes, he passes by with a few phrases of commonplace commendation. The origin of the drama, the doctrines of the sophists, the course of Athenian education, the state of the arts and sciences, the whole domestic system of the Greeks, he has almost completely neglected. Yet these things will appear, to a reflecting man, scarcely less worthy of attention than the taking of Sphacteria or the discipline of the targeteers of Iphicartes.

This, indeed, is a deficiency by no means peculiar to Mr. Mitford. Most people seem to imagine that a detail of public occurrences—the operations of sieges, the changes of administrations, the treaties, the conspiracies, the rebellions—is a complete history. Differences of definition are logically unimportant ; but practically they sometimes produce the most momentous effects. Thus it has been in the present case. Historians have, almost without exception, confined themselves to the public transactions of states, and have left to the negligent administration of writers of fiction a province at least equally extensive and valuable.

All wise statesmen have agreed to consider the prosperity or adversity of nations as made up of the happiness or misery of individuals, and to reject as chimerical all notions of a public interest of the community, distinct from the interest of the component parts. It is, therefore, strange that those whose office it is to supply statesmen with examples and warnings should omit, as too mean for the dignity of history,

circumstances which exert the most extensive influence on the state of society. In general, the undercurrent of human life flows steadily on, unruffled by the storms which agitate the surface. The happiness of the many commonly depends on causes independent of victories or defeats, of revolutions or restorations—causes which can be regulated by no laws, and which are recorded in no archives. These causes are the things which it is of main importance to us to know ; not how the Lacedæmonian phalanx was broken at Leuctra—not whether Alexander died of poison or by disease. History, without these, is a shell without a kernel ; and such is almost all the history which is extant in the world. Paltry skirmishes and plots are reported with absurd and useless minuteness ; but improvements the most essential to the comfort of human life extend themselves over the world, and introduce themselves into every cottage, before any annalist can condescend, from the dignity of writing about generals and ambassadors, to take the least notice of them. Thus the progress of the most salutary inventions and discoveries is buried in impenetrable mystery ; mankind are deprived of a most useful species of knowledge, and their benefactors of their honest fame. In the mean time every child knows by heart the dates and adventures of a long line of barbarian kings. The history of nations, in the sense in which I use the word, is often best studied in works not professedly historical. Thucydides, as far as he goes, is an excellent writer ; yet he affords us far less knowledge of the most important particulars relating to Athens than Plato or Aristophanes. The little treatise of Xenophon on Domestic Economy contains more historical information than all the seven

books of his Hellenics. The same may be said of the Satires of Horace, of the Letters of Cicero, of the novels of Le Sage, of the memoirs of Marmontel. Many others might be mentioned ; but these sufficiently illustrate my meaning.

I would hope that there may yet appear a writer who may despise the present narrow limits, and assert the rights of history over every part of her natural domain. Should such a writer engage in that enterprise, in which I cannot but consider Mr. Mitford as having failed, he will record, indeed, all that is interesting and important in military and political transactions ; but he will not think anything too trivial for the gravity of history which is not too trivial to promote or diminish the happiness of man. He will portray in vivid colors the domestic society, the manners, the amusements, the conversation of the Greeks. He will not disdain to discuss the state of agriculture, of the mechanical arts, and of the conveniences of life. The progress of painting, of sculpture, and of architecture will form an important part of his plan. But, above all, his attention will be given to the history of that splendid literature from which has sprung all the strength, the wisdom, the freedom, and the glory of the Western World.

Of the indifference which Mr. Mitford shows on this subject I will not speak ; for I cannot speak with fairness. It is a subject on which I love to forget the accuracy of a judge, in the veneration of a worshipper and the gratitude of a child. If we consider merely the subtlety of disquisition, the force of imagination, the perfect energy and elegance of expression, which characterize the great works of Athenian genius, we

must pronounce them intrinsically most valuable ; but what shall we say when we reflect that from hence have sprung, directly or indirectly, all the noblest creations of the human intellect; that from hence were the vast accomplishments and the brilliant fancy of Cicero ; the withering fire of Juvenal ; the plastic imagination of Dante ; the humor of Cervantes ; the comprehension of Bacon ; the wit of Butler ; the supreme and universal excellence of Shakspeare ? All the triumphs of truth and genius over prejudice and power, in every country and in every age, have been the triumphs of Athens. Wherever a few great minds have made a stand against violence and fraud, in the cause of liberty and reason, there has been her spirit in the midst of them ; inspiring, encouraging, consoling ;—by the lonely lamp of Erasmus ; by the restless bed of Pascal ; in the tribune of Mirabeau ; in the cell of Galileo ; on the scaffold of Sidney. But who shall estimate her influence on private happiness ? Who shall say how many thousands have been made wiser, happier, and better by those pursuits in which she has taught mankind to engage ; to how many the studies which took their rise from her have been wealth in poverty, liberty in bondage, health in sickness, society in solitude ? Her power is, indeed, manifested at the bar, in the senate, in the field of battle, in the schools of philosophy. But these are not her glory. Wherever literature consoles sorrow or assuages pain, wherever it brings gladness to eyes which fail with wakefulness and tears, and ache for the dark house and the long sleep, there is exhibited, in its noblest form, the immortal influence of Athens.

The dervish in the Arabian tale did not hesitate to

abandon to his comrade the camels with their load of jewels and gold, while he retained the casket of that mysterious juice which enabled him to behold at one glance all the hidden riches of the universe. Surely it is no exaggeration to say that no external advantage is to be compared with that purification of the intellectual eye which gives us to contemplate the infinite wealth of the mental world, all the hoarded treasures of its primeval dynasties, all the shapeless ore of its yet unexplored mines. This is the gift of Athens to man. Her freedom and her power have for more than twenty centuries been annihilated ; her people have degenerated into timid slaves ; her language into a barbarous jargon ; her temples have been given up to the successive depredations of Romans, Turks, and Scotchmen ; but her intellectual empire is imperishable. And when those who have rivalled her greatness shall have shared her fate ; when civilization and knowledge shall have fixed their abode in distant continents ; when the sceptre shall have passed away from England ; when, perhaps, travellers from distant regions shall in vain labor to decipher on some mouldering pedestal the name of our proudest chief ; shall hear savage hymns chanted to some misshapen idol over the ruined dome of our proudest temple ; and shall see a single naked fisherman wash his nets in the river of the ten thousand masts ; her influence and her glory will still survive, fresh in eternal youth, exempt from mutability and decay, immortal as the intellectual principle from which they derived their origin, and over which they exercise their control.

LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME

PREFACE

THAT what is called the history of the kings and early consuls of Rome is to a great extent fabulous, few scholars have, since the time of Beaufort, ventured to deny. It is certain that, more than three hundred and sixty years after the date ordinarily assigned for the foundation of the city, the public records were, with scarcely an exception, destroyed by the Gauls. It is certain that the oldest annals of the commonwealth were compiled more than a century and a half after this destruction of the records. It is certain, therefore, that the great Latin writers of the Augustan age did not possess those materials without which a trustworthy account of the infancy of the Republic could not possibly be framed. Those writers own, indeed, that the chronicles to which they had access were filled with battles that were never fought, and consuls that were never inaugurated ; and we have abundant proof that, in these chronicles, events of the greatest importance—such as the issue of the war with Porsena, and the issue of the war with Brennus—were grossly misrepresented. Under these circumstances, a wise man will look with great suspicion on the legend which has come down to us. He will, perhaps, be inclined to regard the princes who are said to have founded the

civil and religious institutions of Rome, the son of Mars, and the husband of Egeria, as mere mythological personages, of the same class with Perseus and Ixion. As he draws nearer and nearer to the confines of authentic history, he will become less and less hard of belief. He will admit that the most important parts of the narrative have some foundation in truth. But he will distrust almost all the details, not only because they seldom rest on any solid evidence, but also because he will constantly detect in them, even when they are within the limits of physical possibility, that peculiar character, more easily understood than defined, which distinguishes the creations of the imagination from the realities of the world in which we live.

The early history of Rome is indeed far more poetical than anything else in Latin literature. The loves of the Vestal and the God of War ; the cradle laid among the reeds of Tiber ; the fig-tree ; the she-wolf ; the shepherd's cabin ; the recognition ; the fratricide ; the rape of the Sabines ; the death of Tarpeia ; the fall of Hostus Hostilius ; the struggle of Mettus Curtius through the marsh ; the women rushing with torn raiment and dishevelled hair between their fathers and their husbands ; the nightly meetings of Numa and the Nymph by the well in the sacred grove ; the fight of the three Romans and the three Albans ; the purchase of the Sibylline books ; the crime of Tullia ; the simulated madness of Brutus ; the ambiguous reply of the Delphian oracle to the Tarquins ; the wrongs of Lucretia ; the heroic actions of Horatius Cocles, of Scævola, and of Clœlia ; the battle of Regillus, won by the aid of Castor and Pollux ; the defence of Cremera ; the touching story of Coriolanus ; the still more

touching story of Virginia ; the wild legend about the draining of the Alban lake ; the combat between Valerius Corvus and the gigantic Gaul—are among the many instances which will at once suggest themselves to every reader.

In the narrative of Livy, who was a man of fine imagination, these stories retain much of their genuine character. Nor could even the tasteless Dionysius distort and mutilate them into mere prose. The poetry shines, in spite of him, through the dreary pedantry of his eleven books. It is discernible in the most tedious and in the most superficial modern works on the early times of Rome. It enlivens the dulness of the Universal History, and gives a charm to the most meagre abridgments of Goldsmith.

Even in the age of Plutarch there were discerning men who rejected the popular account of the foundation of Rome, because that account appeared to them to have the air, not of a history, but of a romance or a drama. Plutarch, who was displeased at their incredulity, had nothing better to say in reply to their arguments than that chance sometimes turns poet, and produces trains of events not to be distinguished from the most elaborate plots which are constructed by art.[1]

[1] Ὑποπτον μὲν ἐνίοις ἐστὶ τὸ δραματικὸν καὶ πλασματῶδες· οὐ δεῖ δὲ ἀπιστεῖν, τὴν τύχην ὁρῶντας, οἵων ποιημάτων δημιουργός ἐστι.—Plut., *Rom.*, viii. This remarkable passage has been more grossly misinterpreted than any other in the Greek language, where the sense was so obvious. The Latin version of Cruserius, the French version of Amyot, the old English version by several hands, and the later English version by Langhorne are all equally destitute of every trace of the meaning of the original. None of the translators saw even that *ποίημα* is a poem. They all render it an event.

But though the existence of a poetical element in the early history of the Great City was detected so many ages ago, the first critic who distinctly saw from what source that poetical element had been derived was James Perizonius, one of the most acute and learned antiquaries of the seventeenth century. His theory, which, in his own days, attracted little or no notice, was revived in the present generation by Niebuhr, a man who would have been the first writer of his time if his talent for communicating truths had borne any proportion to his talent for investigating them. That theory has been adopted by several eminent scholars of our own country, particularly by the Bishop of St. David's, by Professor Malden, and by the lamented Arnold. It appears to be now generally received by men conversant with classical antiquity ; and, indeed, it rests on such strong proofs, both internal and external, that it will not be easily subverted. A popular exposition of this theory, and of the evidence by which it is supported, may not be without interest even for readers who are unacquainted with the ancient languages.

The Latin literature which has come down to us is of later date than the commencement of the second Punic war, and consists almost exclusively of works fashioned on Greek models. The Latin metres, heroic, elegiac, lyric, and dramatic, are of Greek origin. The best Latin epic poetry is the feeble echo of the Iliad and Odyssey. The best Latin eclogues are imitations of Theocritus. The plan of the most finished didactic poem in the Latin tongue was taken from Hesiod. The Latin tragedies are bad copies of the masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides. The Latin comedies are

free translations from Demophilus, Menander, and Apollodorus. The Latin philosophy was borrowed, without alteration, from the Portico and the Academy; and the great Latin orators constantly proposed to themselves as patterns the speeches of Demosthenes and Lysias.

But there was an earlier Latin literature—a literature truly Latin—which has wholly perished, which had, indeed, almost wholly perished long before those whom we are in the habit of regarding as the greatest Latin writers were born. That literature abounded with metrical romances, such as are found in every country where there is much curiosity and intelligence, but little reading and writing. All human beings not utterly savage long for some information about past times, and are delighted by narratives which present pictures to the eye of the mind. But it is only in very enlightened communities that books are readily accessible. Metrical composition, therefore, which, in a highly civilized nation, is a mere luxury, is, in nations imperfectly civilized, almost a necessary of life, and is valued less on account of the pleasure which it gives to the ear than on account of the help which it gives to the memory. A man who can invent or embellish an interesting story, and put it into a form which others may easily retain in their recollection, will always be highly esteemed by a people eager for amusement and information, but destitute of libraries. Such is the origin of ballad-poetry, a species of composition which scarcely ever fails to spring up and flourish in every society at a certain point in the progress towards refinement. Tacitus informs us that songs were the only memorials of the past which the ancient Germans pos-

sessed. We learn from Lucan and from Ammianus Marcellinus that the brave actions of the ancient Gauls were commemorated in the verses of bards. During many ages, and through many revolutions, minstrelsy retained its influence over both the Teutonic and the Celtic race. The vengeance exacted by the spouse of Attila for the murder of Siegfried was celebrated in rhymes, of which Germany is still justly proud. The exploits of Athelstane were commemorated by the Anglo-Saxons, and those of Canute by the Danes, in rude poems, of which a few fragments have come down to us. The chants of the Welsh harpers preserved, through ages of darkness, a faint and doubtful memory of Arthur. In the Highlands of Scotland may still be gleaned some relics of the old songs about Cuthullin and Fingal. The long struggle of the Servians against the Ottoman power was recorded in lays full of martial spirit. We learn from Herrera that, when a Peruvian Inca died, men of skill were appointed to celebrate him in verses, which all the people learned by heart, and sang in public on days of festival. The feats of Kurroglou, the great freebooter of Turkistan, recounted in ballads composed by himself, are known in every village of Northern Persia. Captain Beechey heard the bards of the Sandwich Islands recite the heroic achievements of Tamehameha, the most illustrious of their kings. Mungo Park found in the heart of Africa a class of singing-men, the only annalists of their rude tribes, and heard them tell the story of the victory which Damel, the negro prince of the Jaloffs, won over Abdulkader, the Mussulman tyrant of Foota Torra. This species of poetry attained a high degree of excellence among the Castilians before they began to copy

Tuscan patterns. It attained a still higher degree of excellence among the English and the Lowland Scotch during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. But it reached its full perfection in ancient Greece; for there can be no doubt that the great Homeric poems are generically ballads, though widely distinguished from all other ballads, and, indeed, from almost all other human compositions, by transcendent sublimity and beauty.

As it is agreeable to general experience that, at a certain stage in the progress of society, ballad-poetry should flourish, so is it also agreeable to general experience that, at a subsequent stage in the progress of society, ballad-poetry should be undervalued and neglected. Knowledge advances; manners change; great foreign models of composition are studied and imitated. The phraseology of the old minstrels becomes obsolete. Their versification, which, having received its laws only from the ear, abounds in irregularities, seems licentious and uncouth. Their simplicity appears beggarly when compared with the quaint forms and gaudy coloring of such artists as Cowley and Gongora. The ancient lays, unjustly despised by the learned and polite, linger for a time in the memory of the vulgar, and are at length too often irretrievably lost. We cannot wonder that the ballads of Rome should have altogether disappeared, when we remember how very narrowly, in spite of the invention of printing, those of our own country and those of Spain escaped the same fate. There is, indeed, little doubt that oblivion covers many English songs equal to any that were published by Bishop Percy, and many Spanish songs as good as the best of those which have been so happily translated by

Mr. Lockhart. Eighty years ago, England possessed only one tattered copy of Childe Waters and Sir Cauline, and Spain only one tattered copy of the noble poem of the Cid. The snuff of a candle, or a mischievous dog, might, in a moment, have deprived the world forever of any of those fine compositions. Sir Walter Scott, who united to the fire of a great poet the minute curiosity and patient diligence of a great antiquary, was but just in time to save the precious relics of the Minstrelsy of the Border. In Germany, the Lay of the Nibelungs had been long utterly forgotten, when, in the eighteenth century, it was, for the first time, printed from a manuscript in the old library of a noble family. In truth, the only people who, through their whole passage from simplicity to the highest civilization, never for a moment ceased to love and admire their old ballads were the Greeks.

That the early Romans should have had ballad-poetry, and that this poetry should have perished, is therefore not strange. It would, on the contrary, have been strange if these things had not come to pass ; and we should be justified in pronouncing them highly probable even if we had no direct evidence on the subject. But we have direct evidence of unquestionable authority.

Ennius, who flourished in the time of the second Punic war, was regarded in the Augustan age as the father of Latin poetry. He was, in truth, the father of the second school of Latin poetry, the only school of which the works have descended to us. But from Ennius himself we learn that there were poets who stood to him in the same relation in which the author of the romance of Count Alarcos stood to Garcilaso, or

the author of the Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode to Lord Surrey. Ennius speaks of verses which the Fauns and the bards were wont to chant in the old time, when none had yet studied the graces of speech, when none had yet climbed the peaks sacred to the goddesses of Grecian song. "Where," Cicero mournfully asks, "are those old verses now?"[1]

Contemporary with Ennius was Quintus Fabius Pictor, the earliest of the Roman annalists. His account of the infancy and youth of Romulus and Remus has been preserved by Dionysius, and contains a very remarkable reference to the ancient Latin poetry. Fabius says that, in his time, his countrymen were still in the habit of singing ballads about the Twins. "Even in the hut of Faustulus"—so these old lays appear to have run—"the children of Rhea and Mars

[1] "Quid? Nostri versus ubi sunt?
. . . 'Quos olim Fauni vatesque canebant,
Cum neque Musarum scopulos quisquam superârat,
Nec dicti studiosus erat.'"—*Brutus*, xxii.

The Muses, it should be observed, are Greek divinities. The Italian goddesses of verse were the Camœnæ. At a later period, the appellations were used indiscriminately; but in the age of Ennius there was probably a distinction. In the epitaph of Nævius, who was the representative of the old Italian school of poetry, the Camœnæ, not the Muses, are represented as grieving for the loss of their votary. The "Musarum scopuli" are evidently the peaks of Parnassus.

Scaliger, in a note on Varro (*De Lingua Latina*, lib. vi.), suggests, with great ingenuity, that the Fauns, who were represented by the superstition of later ages as a race of monsters, half gods and half brutes, may really have been a class of men who exercised in Latium, at a very remote period, the same functions which belonged to the Magians in Persia and to the bards in Gaul.

were, in port and in spirit, not like unto swineherds or cowherds, but such that men might well guess them to be of the blood of kings and gods." [1]

[1] *Οἱ δὲ ἀνδρωθέντες γίνονται, κατά τε ἀξίωσιν μορφῆς καὶ φρονήματος ὄγκον οὐ συοφορβοῖς καὶ βουκόλοις ἐοικότες, ἀλλ' οἵους ἄν τις ἀξιώσειε τοὺς ἐκ βασιλείου τε φύντας γένους, καὶ ἀπὸ δαιμόνων σπορᾶς γενέσθαι νομιζομένους, ὡς ἐν τοῖς πατρίοις ὕμνοις ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ἔτι καὶ νῦν ᾄδεται.* —DION. HAL., i., 79. This passage has sometimes been cited as if Dionysius had been speaking in his own person, and had, Greek as he was, been so industrious or so fortunate as to discover some valuable remains of that early Latin poetry which the greatest Latin writers of his age regretted as hopelessly lost. Such a supposition is highly improbable; and, indeed, it seems clear from the context that Dionysius, as Reiske and other editors evidently thought, was merely quoting from Fabius Pictor. The whole passage has the air of an extract from an ancient chronicle, and is introduced by the words *Κοΐντος μὲν Φάβιος, ὁ Πίκτωρ λεγομενος, τῇδε γράφει.*

Another argument may be urged which seems to deserve consideration. The author of the passage in question mentions a thatched hut which, in his time, stood between the summit of Mount Palatine and the Circus. This hut, he says, was built by Romulus, and was constantly kept in repair at the public charge, but never in any respect embellished. Now, in the age of Dionysius there certainly was at Rome a thatched hut, said to have been that of Romulus. But this hut, as we learn from Vitruvius, stood, not near the Circus, but in the Capitol (Vit., ii., 1). If, therefore, we understand Dionysius to speak in his own person, we can reconcile his statement with that of Vitruvius only by supposing that there were at Rome, in the Augustan age, two thatched huts, both believed to have been built by Romulus, and both carefully repaired and held in high honor. The objections to such a supposition seem to be strong. Neither Dionysius nor Vitruvius speaks of more than one such hut. Dio Cassius informs us that twice, during the long administration of Augustus, the hut of Romulus caught fire (xlviii.,

Cato the Censor, who also lived in the days of the second Punic war, mentioned this lost literature in his lost work on the antiquities of his country. Many ages, he said, before his time, there were ballads in praise of illustrious men ; and these ballads it was the fashion

43, liv., 29). Had there been two such huts, would he not have told us of which he spoke? An English historian would hardly give an account of a fire at Queen's College without saying whether it was at Queen's College, Oxford, or at Queen's College, Cambridge. Marcus Seneca, Macrobius, and Conon, a Greek writer from whom Photius has made large extracts, mention only one hut of Romulus, that in the Capitol (M. Seneca, *Contr.*, i., 6 ; Macrobius, *Sat.*, i., 15 ; Photius, *Bibl.*, 186). Ovid, Livy, Petronius, Valerius Maximus, Lucius Seneca, and St. Jerome mention only one hut of Romulus, without specifying the site (Ovid, *Fasti*, iii., 183 ; Liv., v., 53 ; Petronius, *Fragm.* ; Val. Max., iv., 4 ; L. Seneca, *Consolatio ad Helviam* ; D. Hieron., *Ad Paulinianum de Didymo*).

The whole difficulty is removed if we suppose that Dionysius was merely quoting Fabius Pictor. Nothing is more probable than that the cabin, which, in the time of Fabius, stood near the Circus, might, long before the age of Augustus, have been transported to the Capitol, as the place fittest, by reason both of its safety and of its sanctity, to contain so precious a relic.

The language of Plutarch confirms this hypothesis. He describes with great precision the spot where Romulus dwelt, on the slope of Mount Palatine, leading to the Circus ; but he says not a word implying that the dwelling was still to be seen there. Indeed, his expressions imply that it was no longer there. The evidence of Solinus is still more to the point. He, like Plutarch, describes the spot where Romulus had resided, and says expressly that the hut had been there, but that in his time it was there no longer. The site, it is certain, was well remembered ; and probably retained its old name, as Charing Cross and the Haymarket have done. This is probably the explanation of the words "casa Romuli" in Victor's description of the Tenth Region of Rome under Valentinian.

for the guests at banquets to sing in turn while the piper played. "Would," exclaimed Cicero, "that we still had the old ballads of which Cato speaks!"[1]

Valerius Maximus gives us exactly similar information, without mentioning his authority, and observes that the ancient Roman ballads were probably of more benefit to the young than all the lectures of the Athenian schools, and that to the influence of the national poetry were to be ascribed the virtues of such men as Camillus and Fabricius.[2]

Varro, whose authority on all questions connected with the antiquities of his country is entitled to the greatest respect, tells us that at banquets it was once the fashion for boys to sing, sometimes with and sometimes without instrumental music, ancient ballads in praise of men of former times. These young performers, he observes, were of unblemished character, a circumstance which he probably mentioned because, among the Greeks, and indeed in his time among the

[1] Cicero refers twice to this important passage in Cato's *Antiquities:* "Gravissimus auctor in Originibus dixit Cato, morem apud majores hunc epularum fuisse, ut deinceps, qui accubarent, canerent ad tibiam clarorum virorum laudes atque virtutes. Ex quo perspicuum est, et cantus tum fuisse rescriptos vocum sonis, et carmina."—*Tusc. Quæst.*, iv., 2. Again: "Utinam exstarent illa carmina, quæ, multis sæculis ante suam ætatem, in epulis esse cantitata a singulis convivis de clarorum vivorum laudibus, in Originibus scriptum reliquit Cato."—*Brutus*, xix.

[2] "Majores natu in conviviis ad tibias egregia superiorum opera carmine comprehensa pangebant, quo ad ea imitanda juventutem alacriorem reddercnt. . . . Quas Athenas, quam scholam, quæ alienigena studia huic domesticæ disciplinæ prætulerim? Inde oriebantur Camilli, Scipiones, Fabricii, Marcelli, Fabii."—VAL. MAX., ii., 1.

Romans also, the morals of singing-boys were in no high repute.[1]

The testimony of Horace, though given incidentally, confirms the statements of Cato, Valerius Maximus, and Varro. The poet predicts that, under the peaceful administration of Augustus, the Romans will, over their full goblets, sing to the pipe, after the fashion of their fathers, the deeds of brave captains, and the ancient legends touching the origin of the city.[2]

The proposition, then, that Rome had ballad-poetry is not merely in itself highly probable, but is fully proved by direct evidence of the greatest weight.

This proposition being established, it becomes easy to understand why the early history of the city is unlike almost everything else in Latin literature, native where almost everything else is borrowed, imaginative where almost everything else is prosaic. We can scarcely hesitate to pronounce that the magnificent, pathetic, and truly national legends which present so striking a contrast to all that surrounds them are broken and defaced fragments of that early poetry which, even in the age of Cato the Censor, had become antiquated, and of which Tully had never heard a line.

[1] "In conviviis pueri modesti ut cantarent carmina antiqua, in quibus laudes erant majorum, et assa voce, et cum tibicine. Nonius, *Assa voce pro sola.*"

[2] "Nosque et profestis lucibus et sacris,
Inter jocosi munera Liberi,
Cum prole matronisque nostris,
Rite deos prius apprecati,
Virtute functos, more patrum, duces,
Lydis remixto carmine tibiis,
Trojamque et Anchisen et almæ
Progeniem Veneris canemus."—*Carm.*, iv., 15.

That this poetry should have been suffered to perish will not appear strange when we consider how complete was the triumph of the Greek genius over the public mind of Italy. It is probable that, at an early period, Homer and Herodotus furnished some hints to the Latin minstrels ;[1] but it was not till after the war with Pyrrhus that the poetry of Rome began to put off its old Ausonian character. The transformation was soon consummated. The conquered, says Horace, led captive the conquerors. It was precisely at the time at which the Roman people rose to unrivalled political ascendency that they stooped to pass under the intellectual yoke. It was precisely at the time at which the sceptre departed from Greece that the empire of her language and of her arts became universal and despotic. The revolution, indeed, was not effected without a struggle. Nævius seems to have been the last of the ancient line of poets. Ennius was the founder of a new dynasty. Nævius celebrated the first Punic war in Saturnian verse, the old national verse of Italy.[2]

[1] See the Preface to the *Lay of the Battle of Regillus.*

[2] Cicero speaks highly, in more than one place, of this poem of Nævius ; Ennius sneered at it, and stole from it.

As to the Saturnian measure, see Hermann's *Elementa Doctrinæ Metricæ*, iii., 9.

The Saturnian line, according to the grammarians, consisted of two parts. The first was a catalectic dimeter iambic ; the second was composed of three trochees. But the license taken by the early Latin poets seems to have been almost boundless. The most perfect Saturnian line which has been preserved was the work, not of a professional artist, but of an amateur :

"Dabunt malum Metelli Nævio poetæ."

There has been much difference of opinion among learned men respecting the history of this measure. That it is the

Ennius sang the second Punic war in numbers borrowed from the Iliad. The elder poet, in the epitaph which he wrote for himself, and which is a fine speci-

same with a Greek measure used by Archilochus is indisputable (Bentley, *Phalaris*, xi.). But in spite of the authority of Terentianus Maurus, and of the still higher authority of Bentley, we may venture to doubt whether the coincidence was not fortuitous. We constantly find the same rude and simple numbers in different countries, under circumstances which make it impossible to suspect that there has been imitation on either side. Bishop Heber heard the children of a village in Bengal singing "Radha, Radha," to the tune of "My boy Billy." Neither the Castilian nor the German minstrels of the Middle Ages owed anything to Paros or to ancient Rome. Yet both the poem of the Cid and the poem of the Nibelungs contain many Saturnian verses ; as,

"Estas nuevas á mio Cid eran venidas."
"Á mí lo dicen ; a tí dan las orejadas."

"Man möhte michel wunder von Sifride sagen."
"Wa ich den Künic vinde daz sol man mir sagen."

Indeed, there cannot be a more perfect Saturnian line than one which is sung in every English nursery :

"The queen was in her parlor eating bread and honey ;"

yet the author of this line, we may be assured, borrowed nothing from either Nævius or Archilochus.

On the other hand, it is by no means improbable that, two or three hundred years before the time of Ennius, some Latin minstrel may have visited Sybaris or Crotona, may have heard some verses of Archilochus sung, may have been pleased with the metre, and may have introduced it at Rome. Thus much is certain, that the Saturnian measure, if not a native of Italy, was at least so early and so completely naturalized there that its foreign origin was forgotten.

Bentley says, indeed, that the Saturnian measure was first brought from Greece into Italy by Nævius. But this is merely *obiter dictum*, to use a phrase common in our courts of law, and would not have been deliberately maintained by that incomparable critic, whose memory is held in reverence by all lovers

men of the early Roman diction and versification, plaintively boasted that the Latin language had died

of learning. The arguments which might be brought against Bentley's assertion—for it is mere assertion, supported by no evidence—are innumerable. A few will suffice.

1. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Ennius. Ennius sneered at Nævius for writing on the first Punic war in verses such as the old Italian bards used before Greek literature had been studied. Now the poem of Nævius was in Saturnian verse. Is it possible that Ennius could have used such expressions if the Saturnian verse had been just imported from Greece for the first time?

2. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Horace. "When Greece," says Horace, "introduced her arts into our uncivilized country, those rugged Saturnian numbers passed away." Would Horace have said this if the Saturnian numbers had been imported from Greece just before the hexameter?

3. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Festus and of Aurelius Victor, both of whom positively say that the most ancient prophecies attributed to the Fauns were in Saturnian verse.

4. Bentley's assertion is opposed to the testimony of Terentianus Maurus, to whom he has himself appealed. Terentianus Maurus does indeed say that the Saturnian measure, though believed by the Romans from a very early period ("credidit vetustas") to be of Italian invention, was really borrowed from the Greeks. But Terentianus Maurus does not say that it was first borrowed by Nævius. Nay, the expressions used by Terentianus Maurus clearly imply the contrary; for how could the Romans have believed, from a very early period, that this measure was the indigenous production of Latium if it was really brought over from Greece in an age of intelligence and liberal curiosity, in the age which gave birth to Ennius, Plautus, Cato the Censor, and other distinguished writers? If Bentley's assertion were correct, there could have been no more doubt at Rome about the Greek origin of the Saturnian measure than about the Greek origin of hexameters or Sapphics.

with him.[1] Thus what to Horace appeared to be the first faint dawn of Roman literature appeared to Nævius to be its hopeless setting. In truth, one literature was setting and another dawning.

The victory of the foreign taste was decisive ; and, indeed, we can hardly blame the Romans for turning away with contempt from the rude lays which had delighted their fathers, and giving their whole admiration to the immortal productions of Greece. The national romances, neglected by the great and the refined whose education had been finished at Rhodes or Athens, continued, it may be supposed, during some generations to delight the vulgar. While Virgil, in hexameters of exquisite modulation, described the sports of rustics, those rustics were still singing their wild Saturnian ballads.[2] It is not improbable that, at the time when Cicero lamented the irreparable loss of the poems mentioned by Cato, a search among the nooks of the Apennines as active as the search which Sir Walter Scott made among the descendants of the moss-troopers of Liddesdale might have brought to light many fine remains of ancient minstrelsy. No such search was made. The Latin ballads perished forever. Yet discerning critics have thought that they could still perceive in the early history of Rome numerous fragments of this lost poetry, as the traveller on classic ground sometimes finds, built into the heavy wall of a fort or convent, a pillar rich with acanthus leaves, or a frieze where the Amazons and Bacchanals seem to live. The theatres and temples of the Greek and the Roman were degraded into the quarries of the Turk and the Goth.

[1] Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticæ*, i., 24.

[2] See Servius, *in Georg.*, ii., 385.

Even so did the ancient Saturnian poetry become the quarry in which a crowd of orators and annalists found the materials for their prose.

It is not difficult to trace the process by which the old songs were transmuted into the form which they now wear. Funeral panegyric and chronicle appear to have been the intermediate links which connected the lost ballads with the histories now extant. From a very early period it was the usage that an oration should be pronounced over the remains of a noble Roman. The orator, as we learn from Polybius, was expected, on such an occasion, to recapitulate all the services which the ancestors of the deceased had, from the earliest time, rendered to the commonwealth. There can be little doubt that the speaker on whom this duty was imposed would make use of all the stories suited to his purpose which were to be found in the popular lays. There can be as little doubt that the family of an eminent man would preserve a copy of the speech which had been pronounced over his corpse. The compilers of the early chronicles would have recourse to these speeches ; and the great historians of a later period would have recourse to the chronicles.

It may be worth while to select a particular story, and to trace its probable progress through these stages. The description of the migration of the Fabian house to Cremera is one of the finest of the many fine passages which lie thick in the earlier books of Livy. The Consul, clad in his military garb, stands in the vestibule of his house, marshalling his clan, three hundred and six fighting-men, all of the same proud patrician blood, all worthy to be attended by the fasces, and to command the legions. A sad and anxious

retinue of friends accompanies the adventurers through the streets ; but the voice of lamentation is drowned by the shouts of admiring thousands. As the procession passes the Capitol, prayers and vows are poured forth, but in vain. The devoted band, leaving Janus on the right, marches to its doom, through the Gate of Evil Luck. After achieving high deeds of valor against overwhelming numbers, all perish save one child, the stock from which the great Fabian race was destined again to spring, for the safety and glory of the commonwealth. That this fine romance, the details of which are so full of poetical truth, and so utterly destitute of all show of historical truth, came originally from some lay which had often been sung with great applause at banquets is in the highest degree probable. Nor is it difficult to imagine a mode in which the transmission might have taken place. The celebrated Quintus Fabius Maximus, who died about twenty years before the first Punic war, and more than forty years before Ennius was born, is said to have been interred with extraordinary pomp. In the eulogy pronounced over his body, all the great exploits of his ancestors were doubtless recounted and exaggerated. If there were then extant songs which gave a vivid and touching description of an event, the saddest and the most glorious in the long history of the Fabian house, nothing could be more natural than that the panegyrist should borrow from such songs their finest touches, in order to adorn his speech. A few generations later the songs would perhaps be forgotten, or remembered only by shepherds and vine-dressers. But the speech would certainly be preserved in the archives of the Fabian nobles. Fabius Pictor would be well acquainted with

a document so interesting to his personal feelings, and would insert large extracts from it in his rude chronicle. That chronicle, as we know, was the oldest to which Livy had access. Livy would, at a glance, distinguish the bold strokes of the forgotten poet from the dull and feeble narrative by which they were surrounded, would retouch them with a delicate and powerful pencil, and would make them immortal.

That this might happen at Rome can scarcely be doubted ; for something very like this has happened in several countries, and, among others, in our own. Perhaps the theory of Perizonius cannot be better illustrated than by showing that what he supposes to have taken place in ancient times has, beyond all doubt, taken place in modern times.

"History," says Hume, with the utmost gravity, "has preserved some instances of Edgar's amours, from which, as from a specimen, we may form a conjecture of the rest." He then tells very agreeably the stories of Elfleda and Elfrida, two stories which have a most suspicious air of romance, and which, indeed, greatly resemble, in their general character, some of the legends of early Rome. He cites, as his authority for these two tales, the chronicle of William of Malmesbury, who lived in the time of King Stephen. The great majority of readers suppose that the device by which Elfleda was substituted for her young mistress, the artifice by which Athelwold obtained the hand of Elfrida, the detection of that artifice, the hunting party, and the vengeance of the amorous King are things about which there is no more doubt than about the execution of Anne Boleyn, or the slitting of Sir John Coventry's nose. But when we turn to William of Malmesbury,

we find that Hume, in his eagerness to relate these pleasant fables, has overlooked one very important circumstance. William does, indeed, tell both the stories; but he gives us distinct notice that he does not warrant their truth, and that they rest on no better authority than that of ballads.[1]

Such is the way in which these two well-known tales have been handed down. They originally appeared in a poetical form. They found their way from ballads into an old chronicle. The ballads perished; the chronicle remained. A great historian, some centuries after the ballads had been altogether forgotten, consulted the chronicle. He was struck by the lively coloring of these ancient fictions; he transferred them to his pages; and thus we find inserted, as unquestionable facts, in a narrative which is likely to last as long as the English tongue, the inventions of some minstrel whose works were probably never committed to writing, whose name is buried in oblivion, and whose dialect has become obsolete. It must, then, be admitted to be possible, or rather highly probable, that the stories of Romulus and Remus, and of the Horatii and Curiatii, may have had a similar origin.

Castilian literature will furnish us with another parallel case. Mariana, the classical historian of Spain, tells the story of the ill-starred marriage which the King Don Alonso brought about between the heirs of Carrion and the two daughters of the Cid. The Cid bestowed a princely dower on his sons-in-law. But the

[1] "Infamias quas post dicam magis resperserunt cantilenæ." Edgar appears to have been most mercilessly treated in the Anglo-Saxon ballads. He was the favorite of the monks; and the monks and minstrels were at deadly feud.

young men were base and proud, cowardly and cruel. They were tried in danger, and found wanting. They fled before the Moors, and once, when a lion broke out of his den, they ran and crouched in an unseemly hiding-place. They knew that they were despised, and took counsel how they might be avenged. They parted from their father-in-law with many signs of love, and set forth on a journey with Doña Elvira and Doña Sol. In a solitary place the bridegrooms seized their brides, stripped them, scourged them, and departed, leaving them for dead. But one of the House of Bivar, suspecting foul play, had followed the travellers in disguise. The ladies were brought back safe to the house of their father. Complaint was made to the King. It was adjudged by the Cortes that the dower given by the Cid should be returned, and that the heirs of Carrion, together with one of their kindred, should do battle against three knights of the party of the Cid. The guilty youths would have declined the combat; but all their shifts were vain. They were vanquished in the lists, and forever disgraced, while their injured wives were sought in marriage by great princes.[1]

Some Spanish writers have labored to show, by an examination of dates and circumstances, that this story is untrue. Such confutation was surely not needed; for the narrative is on the face of it a romance. How it found its way into Mariana's history is quite clear. He acknowledges his obligations to the ancient chronicles; and had doubtless before him the Crónica del Famoso Cavallero Cid Ruy Diez Campeador, which had been printed as early as the year 1552. He little suspected that all the most striking passages in this

[1] Mariana, lib. x., cap. 4.

chronicle were copied from a poem of the twelfth century, a poem of which the language and versification had long been obsolete, but which glowed with no common portion of the fire of the Iliad. Yet such was the fact. More than a century and a half after the death of Mariana, this venerable ballad, of which one imperfect copy on parchment, four hundred years old, had been preserved at Bivar, was for the first time printed. Then it was found that every interesting circumstance of the story of the heirs of Carrion was derived by the eloquent Jesuit from a song of which he had never heard, and which was composed by a minstrel whose very name had long been forgotten.[1]

Such, or nearly such, appears to have been the process by which the lost ballad-poetry of Rome was transformed into history. To reverse that process, to transform some portions of early Roman history back into the poetry out of which they were made, is the object of this work.

In the following poems the author speaks, not in his own person, but in the persons of ancient minstrels who know only what a Roman citizen, born three or four hundred years before the Christian era, may be supposed to have known, and who are in nowise above the passions and prejudices of their age and nation. To these imaginary poets must be ascribed some blunders which are so obvious that it is unnecessary to point them out. The real blunder would have been to repre-

[1] See the account which Sanchez gives of the Bivar manuscript in the first volume of the *Coleccion de Poesías Castellanas anteriores al Siglo XV.* Part of the story of the Lords of Carrion, in the poem of the Cid, has been translated by Mr. Frere in a manner above all praise.

sent these old poets as deeply versed in general history, and studious of chronological accuracy. To them must also be attributed the illiberal sneers at the Greeks, the furious party-spirit, the contempt for the arts of peace, the love of war for its own sake, the ungenerous exultation over the vanquished, which the reader will sometimes observe. To portray a Roman of the age of Camillus or Curius as superior to national antipathies, as mourning over the devastation and slaughter by which empire and triumphs were to be won, as looking on human suffering with the sympathy of Howard, or as treating conquered enemies with the delicacy of the Black Prince would be to violate all dramatic propriety. The old Romans had some great virtues—fortitude, temperance, veracity, spirit to resist oppression, respect for legitimate authority, fidelity in the observing of contracts, disinterestedness, ardent patriotism ; but Christian charity and chivalrous generosity were alike unknown to them.

It would have been obviously improper to mimic the manner of any particular age or country. Something has been borrowed, however, from our own old ballads, and more from Sir Walter Scott, the great restorer of our ballad-poetry. To the Iliad still greater obligations are due ; and those obligations have been contracted with the less hesitation because there is reason to believe that some of the old Latin minstrels really had recourse to that inexhaustible store of poetical images.

It would have been easy to swell this little volume to a very considerable bulk by appending notes filled with quotations : but to a learned reader such notes are not necessary ; for an unlearned reader they would have little interest ; and the judgment passed both by the

learned and by the unlearned on a work of the imagination will always depend much more on the general character and spirit of such a work than on minute details.

HORATIUS

THERE can be little doubt that among those parts of early Roman history which had a poetical origin was the legend of Horatius Cocles. We have several versions of the story, and these versions differ from each other in points of no small importance. Polybius, there is reason to believe, heard the tale recited over the remains of some consul or prætor descended from the old Horatian patricians ; for he introduces it as a specimen of the narratives with which the Romans were in the habit of embellishing their funeral oratory. It is remarkable that, according to him, Horatius defended the bridge alone, and perished in the waters. According to the chronicles which Livy and Dionysius followed, Horatius had two companions, swam safe to shore, and was loaded with honors and rewards.

These discrepancies are easily explained. Our own literature, indeed, will furnish an exact parallel to what may have taken place at Rome. It is highly probable that the memory of the war of Porsena was preserved by compositions much resembling the two ballads which stand first in the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. In both those ballads the English, commanded by the Percy, fight with the Scots, commanded

by the Douglas. In one of the ballads the Douglas is killed by a nameless English archer, and the Percy by a Scottish spearman ; in the other, the Percy slays the Douglas in single combat, and is himself made prisoner. In the former, Sir Hugh Montgomery is shot through the heart by a Northumbrian bowman ; in the latter he is taken and exchanged for the Percy. Yet both the ballads relate to the same event, and that an event which probably took place within the memory of persons who were alive when both the ballads were made. One of the minstrels says,

> " Old men that knowen the grounde well yenoughe
> Call it the battell of Otterburn :
> At Otterburn began this spurne
> Upon a monnyn day.
> Ther was the dougghte Doglas slean :
> The Perse never went away."

The other poet sums up the event in the following lines:

> " Thys fraye bygan at Otterborne
> Bytwene the nyghte and the day :
> Ther the Dowglas lost hys lyfe,
> And the Percy was lede away."

It is by no means unlikely that there were two old Roman lays about the defence of the bridge ; and that, while the story which Livy has transmitted to us was preferred by the multitude, the other, which ascribed the whole glory to Horatius alone, may have been the favorite with the Horatian house.

The following ballad is supposed to have been made about a hundred and twenty years after the war which it celebrates, and just before the taking of Rome by the

Gauls. The author seems to have been an honest citizen, proud of the military glory of his country, sick of the disputes of factions, and much given to pining after good old times which had never really existed. The allusion, however, to the partial manner in which the public lands were allotted could proceed only from a plebeian ; and the allusion to the fraudulent sale of spoils marks the date of the poem, and shows that the poet shared in the general discontent with which the proceedings of Camillus, after the taking of Veii, were regarded.

The penultimate syllable of the name Porsena has been shortened in spite of the authority of Niebuhr, who pronounces, without assigning any ground for his opinion, that Martial was guilty of a decided blunder in the line

"Hanc spectare manum Porsena non potuit."

It is not easy to understand how any modern scholar, whatever his attainments may be—and those of Niebuhr were undoubtedly immense—can venture to pronounce that Martial did not know the quantity of a word which he must have uttered and heard uttered a hundred times before he left school. Niebuhr seems also to have forgotten that Martial has fellow-culprits to keep him in countenance. Horace has committed the same decided blunder; for he gives us, as a pure iambic line,

"Minacis aut Etrusca Porsenæ manus."

Silius Italicus has repeatedly offended in the same way, as when he says,

"Ceruitur effugiens ardentem Porsena dextram ;"

and, again,

"Clusinum vulgus, cum, Porsena magne, jubebas."

A modern writer may be content to err in such company.

Niebuhr's supposition that each of the three defenders of the bridge was the representative of one of the three patrician tribes is both ingenious and probable, and has been adopted in the following poem.

HORATIUS

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX

I

LARS PORSENA of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting-day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west, and south and north,
To summon his array.

II

East and west, and south and north,
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
  Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
  From many a fruitful plain ;
From many a lonely hamlet,
  Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
  Of purple Apennine ;

IV

From lordly Volaterræ,
  Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
  For godlike kings of old ;
From sea-girt Populonia,
  Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
  Fringing the southern sky ;

V

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
  Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
  Heavy with fair-haired slaves ;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
  Through corn and vines and flowers ;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
  Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
  Drop in dark Auser's rill ;

Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill ;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear ;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill ;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill ;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer ;
Unharmed the water-fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium
This year old men shall reap ;
This year young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep ;
And in the vats of Luna
This year the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand ;

Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given :
" Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena ;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven ;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome,
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

XI

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men ;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting-day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally ;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came

The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright :
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city
The throng stopped up the ways ;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sunburned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now from the rock Tarpeian
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands ;
Nor house nor fence nor dovecot
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain ;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all ;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing
Before the River Gate ;

Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly,
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul;
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast, and nearer,
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still, and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly and more plainly,
  Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
  Of twelve fair cities shine ;
But the banner of proud Clusium
  Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
  The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
  Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
  Each warlike Lucumo.
There Cilnius of Arretium
  On his fleet roan was seen ;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
  By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
  O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
  Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name ;
And by the left false Sextus,
  That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods,

XXVIII

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,

And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

XXIX

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

XXXI

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."

And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

XXXII

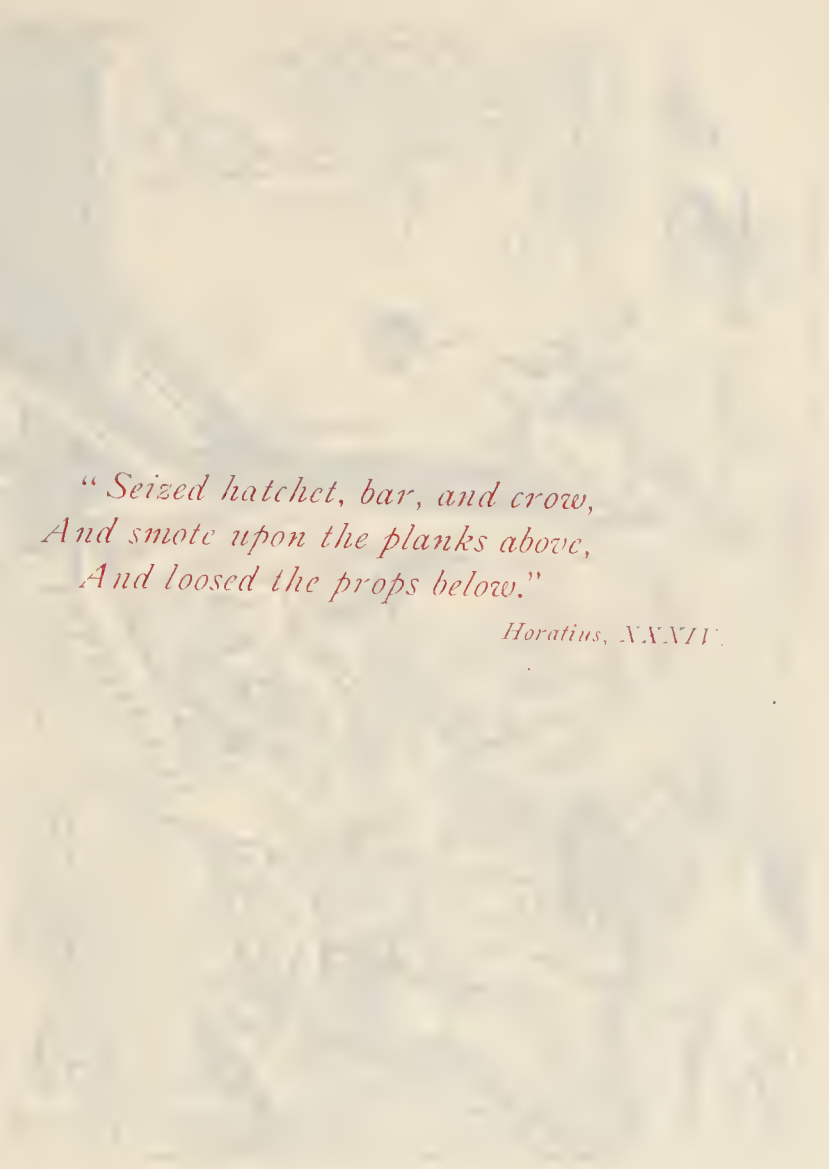
Then none was for a party ;
Then all were for the State ;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great :
Then lands were fairly portioned ;
Then spoils were fairly sold ;
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe ;
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold :
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,



"Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below."

Horatius, XXXII.

The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe ;
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Come flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose ;
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array :
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way ;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines ;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines ;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath ;
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth ;
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust,
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three ;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea ;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields and slaughtered men
Along Albinia's shore.

"The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes."

Horatius XXXVI.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns ;
Lartius laid Ocnus low ;
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate !
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursèd sail."

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark ! the cry is Astur ;
And lo ! the ranks divide ;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high ;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, " The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay ;
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way ? "

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh ;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh :
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space ;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth and skull and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread ;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
" And see," he cried, " the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here !
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer ? "

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath and shame and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race ;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see

On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three ;
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who, unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack ;
But those behind cried " Forward ! "
And those before cried " Back ! "
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array ;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel ;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
Strode out before the crowd ;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud.
" Now welcome, welcome, Sextus !
Now welcome to thy home !
Why dost thou stay and turn away ?
Here lies the road to Rome."

"All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair,
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood."

Horatius, XLIX.

LII

Thrice looked he at the city ;
Thrice looked he at the dead ;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread ;
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied ;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
" Come back, come back, Horatius ! "
Loud cried the Fathers all.
" Back, Lartius ! back, Herminius !
Back, ere the ruin fall ! "

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius ;
Herminius darted back ;
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,

And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream ;
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement and plank and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind ;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
" Down with him ! " cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
" Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
" Now yield thee to our grace. "

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see ;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he ;

But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home ;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome,

LIX

" Oh, Tiber ! father Tiber !
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day ! "
So he spake, and, speaking, sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank ;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank ;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain ;
And fast his blood was flowing,
And he was sore in pain,

And heavy with his armor,
And spent with changing blows ;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing-place ;
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bare bravely up his chin.[1]

LXIII

" Curse on him ! " quoth false Sextus ;
" Will not the villain drown ?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town ! "
" Heaven help him ! " quoth Lars Porsena,
" And bring him safe to shore ;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

[1] " Our ladye bare upp her chinne."
Ballad of Childe Waters.

"Never a heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's force ;
. . . . . .
Yet, through good heart and our Lady's grace,
At length he gained the landing-place."
Lay of the Last Minstrel, I.

"No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank."

Horatius, LX.

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom ;
Now on dry earth he stands ;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands ;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night ;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folks to see ;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee :
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home ;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow ;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within ;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit ;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit ;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close ;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows ;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume ;

When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
  Goes flashing through the loom ;
With weeping and with laughter
  Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
  In the brave days of old.

THE BATTLE OF THE LAKE REGILLUS

THE following poem is supposed to have been produced about ninety years after the Lay of Horatius. Some persons mentioned in the Lay of Horatius make their appearance again, and some appellations and epithets used in the Lay of Horatius have been purposely repeated; for, in an age of ballad-poetry, it scarcely ever fails to happen that certain phrases come to be appropriated to certain men and things, and are regularly applied to those men and things by every minstrel. Thus we find, both in the Homeric poems and in Hesiod, *βίη Ἡρακληείη, περικλύτος Ἀμφιγυήεις, διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης ἑπτάπυλος Θήβη, Ἑλένης ἕνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο.* Thus, too, in our own national songs, Douglas is almost always the doughty Douglas; England is merry England; all the gold is red; and all the ladies are gay.

The principal distinction between the Lay of Horatius and the Lay of the Lake Regillus is that the former is meant to be purely Roman, while the latter, though national in its general spirit, has a slight tincture of Greek learning and of Greek superstition. The story of the Tarquins, as it has come down to us, appears to have

visited the Greek colonies in Italy, if not Greece itself, and to have had some acquaintance with the works of Homer and Herodotus. Many of the most striking adventures of the House of Tarquin, before Lucretia makes her appearance, have a Greek character. The Tarquins themselves are represented as Corinthian nobles of the great House of the Bacchiadæ, driven from their country by the tyranny of that Cypselus the tale of whose strange escape Herodotus has related with incomparable simplicity and liveliness.[1] Livy and Dionysius tell us that, when Tarquin the Proud was asked what was the best mode of governing a conquered city, he replied only by beating down with his staff all the tallest poppies in his garden.[2] This is exactly what Herodotus, in the passage to which reference has already been made, relates of the counsel given to Periander, the son of Cypselus. The stratagem by which the town of Gabii is brought under the power of the Tarquins is, again, obviously copied from Herodotus.[3] The embassy of the young Tarquins to the oracle at Delphi is just such a story as would be told by a poet whose head was full of the Greek mythology; and the ambiguous answer returned by Apollo is in the exact style of the prophecies which, according to Herodotus, lured Crœsus to destruction. Then the character of the narrative changes. From the first mention of Lucretia to the retreat of Porsena nothing seems to be borrowed from foreign sources. The villany of Sextus, the suicide of his victim, the revolution, the death of the sons of Brutus, the defence of the

[1] Herodotus, v., 92. Livy, i., 34. Dionysius, iii., 46.
[2] Livy, i., 54. Dionysius, iv., 56.
[3] Herodotus, iii., 154. Livy, i., 53.

bridge, Mucius burning his hand,[1] Clœlia swimming through the Tiber, seem to be all strictly Roman. But when we have done with the Tuscan war, and enter upon the war with the Latines, we are again struck by the Greek air of the story. The Battle of the Lake Regillus is, in all respects, a Homeric battle, except that the combatants ride astride on their horses, instead of driving chariots. The mass of fighting-men is hardly mentioned. The leaders single each other out, and engage hand to hand. The great object of the warriors on both sides is, as in the Iliad, to obtain possession of the spoils and bodies of the slain ; and several circumstances are related which forcibly remind us of the great slaughter round the corpses of Sarpedon and Patroclus.

But there is one circumstance which deserves especial notice. Both the war of Troy and the war of Regillus were caused by the licentious passions of young princes, who were therefore peculiarly bound not to be sparing of their own persons in the day of battle. Now the conduct of Sextus at Regillus, as described by Livy, so exactly resembles that of Paris, as described at the beginning of the third book of the Iliad, that it is difficult to believe the resemblance accidental. Paris appears before the Trojan ranks, defying the bravest Greek to encounter him.

Τρωσὶν μὲν προμάχιζεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδής,
. . . Ἀργείων προκαλίζετο πάντας ἀρίστους,
ἀντίβιον μαχέσασθαι ἐν αἰνῇ δηϊοτῆτι.

[1] M. de Pouilly attempted, a hundred and twenty years ago, to prove that the story of Mucius was of Greek origin ; but he was signally confuted by the Abbé Sallier. See the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, vi., 27, 66.

Livy introduces Sextus in a similar manner: "Ferocem juvenem Tarquinium, ostentantem se in prima exsulum acie." Menelaus rushes to meet Paris. A Roman noble, eager for vengeance, spurs his horse towards Sextus. Both the guilty princes are instantly terror-stricken:

> *Τὸν δ' ὡς οὖν ἐνόησεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδὴς*
> *ἐν προμάχοισι φανέντα, κατεπλήγη φίλον ἦτορ·*
> *ἂψ δ' ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἔχάζετο κῆρ' ἀλεείνων.*

"Tarquinius," says Livy, "retro in agmen suorum infenso cessit hosti." If this be a fortuitous coincidence, it is one of the most extraordinary in literature.

In the following poem, therefore, images and incidents have been borrowed, not merely without scruple, but on principle, from the incomparable battle-pieces of Homer.

The popular belief at Rome, from an early period, seems to have been that the event of the great day of Regillus was decided by supernatural agency. Castor and Pollux, it was said, had fought, armed and mounted, at the head of the legions of the commonwealth, and had afterwards carried the news of the victory with incredible speed to the city. The well in the Forum at which they had alighted was pointed out. Near the well rose their ancient temple. A great festival was kept to their honor on the ides of Quintilis, supposed to be the anniversary of the battle; and on that day sumptuous sacrifices were offered to them at the public charge. One spot on the margin of Lake Regillus was regarded during many ages with superstitious awe. A mark, resembling in shape a horse's hoof, was discernible in the volcanic rock; and this

mark was believed to have been made by one of the celestial chargers.

How the legend originated cannot now be ascertained; but we may easily imagine several ways in which it might have originated; nor is it at all necessary to suppose, with Julius Frontinus, that two young men were dressed up by the Dictator to personate the sons of Leda. It is probable that Livy is correct when he says that the Roman general, in the hour of peril, vowed a temple to Castor. If so, nothing could be more natural than that the multitude should ascribe the victory to the favor of the Twin Gods. When such was the prevailing sentiment, any man who chose to declare that, in the midst of the confusion and slaughter, he had seen two godlike forms on white horses scattering the Latines would find ready credence. We know, indeed, that, in modern times, a very similar story actually found credence among a people much more civilized than the Romans of the fifth century before Christ. A chaplain of Cortes, writing about thirty years after the conquest of Mexico, in an age of printing-presses, libraries, universities, scholars, logicians, jurists, and statesmen, had the face to assert that, in one engagement against the Indians, Saint James had appeared on a gray horse at the head of the Castilian adventurers. Many of those adventurers were living when this lie was printed. One of them, honest Bernal Diaz, wrote an account of the expedition. He had the evidence of his own senses against the legend; but he seems to have distrusted even the evidence of his own senses. He says that he was in the battle, and that he saw a gray horse with a man on his back, but that the man was, to his think-

ing, Francisco de Morla, and not the ever-blessed apostle Saint James. "Nevertheless," Bernal adds, "it may be that the person on the gray horse was the glorious apostle Saint James, and that I, sinner that I am, was unworthy to see him." The Romans of the age of Cincinnatus were probably quite as credulous as the Spanish subjects of Charles the Fifth. It is therefore conceivable that the appearance of Castor and Pollux may have become an article of faith before the generation which had fought at Regillus had passed away. Nor could anything be more natural than that the poets of the next age should embellish this story, and make the celestial horsemen bear the tidings of victory to Rome.

Many years after the temple of the Twin Gods had been built in the Forum, an important addition was made to the ceremonial by which the State annually testified its gratitude for their protection. Quintus Fabius and Publius Decius were elected Censors at a momentous crisis. It had become absolutely necessary that the classification of the citizens should be revised. On that classification depended the distribution of political power. Party-spirit ran high; and the republic seemed to be in danger of falling under the dominion either of a narrow oligarchy or of an ignorant and headstrong rabble. Under such circumstances, the most illustrious patrician and the most illustrious plebeian of the age were intrusted with the office of arbitrating between the angry factions; and they performed their arduous task to the satisfaction of all honest and reasonable men.

One of their reforms was a remodelling of the equestrian order; and, having effected this reform, they de-

termined to give to their work a sanction derived from religion. In the chivalrous societies of modern times —societies which have much more than may at first sight appear in common with the equestrian order of Rome—it has been usual to invoke the special protection of some saint, and to observe his day with peculiar solemnity. Thus the Companions of the Garter wear the image of Saint George depending from their collars, and meet, on great occasions, in Saint George's Chapel. Thus, when Louis the Fourteenth instituted a new order of chivalry for the rewarding of military merit, he commended it to the favor of his own glorified ancestor and patron, and decreed that all the members of the fraternity should meet at the royal palace on the feast of Saint Louis, should attend the King to chapel, should hear mass, and should subsequently hold their great annual assembly. There is a considerable resemblance between this rule of the Order of Saint Louis and the rule which Fabius and Decius made respecting the Roman knights. It was ordained that a grand muster and inspection of the equestrian body should be part of the ceremonial performed, on the anniversary of the battle of Regillus, in honor of Castor and Pollux, the two equestrian gods. All the knights, clad in purple and crowned with olive, were to meet at a temple of Mars in the suburbs. Thence they were to ride in state to the Forum, where the temple of the Twins stood. This pageant was, during several centuries, considered as one of the most splendid sights of Rome. In the time of Dionysius the cavalcade sometimes consisted of five thousand horsemen, all persons of fair repute and easy fortune.[1]

[1] See Livy, ix., 46. Val. Max, ii., 2. Aurel. Vict., *De Viris*

There can be no doubt that the censors who instituted this august ceremony acted in concert with the pontiffs, to whom, by the constitution of Rome, the superintendence of the public worship belonged ; and it is probable that those high religious functionaries were, as usual, fortunate enough to find in their books or traditions some warrant for the innovation.

The following poem is supposed to have been made for this great occasion. Songs, we know, were chanted at the religious festivals of Rome from an early period, indeed from so early a period that some of the sacred verses were popularly ascribed to Numa, and were utterly unintelligible in the age of Augustus. In the second Punic war, a great feast was held in honor of Juno, and a song was sung in her praise. This song was extant when Livy wrote ; and, though exceedingly rugged and uncouth, seemed to him not wholly destitute of merit.[1] A song, as we learn from Horace,[2] was part of the established ritual at the great Secular Jubilee. It is therefore likely that the censors and pontiffs, when they had resolved to add a grand procession of knights to the other solemnities annually performed on the ides of Quintilis, would call in the aid of a poet. Such a poet would naturally take for his subject the battle of Regillus, the appearance of the Twin Gods, and the institution of their festival. He would find abundant materials in the ballads of his predecessors ; and he would make free use of the scanty stock of Greek learning which he had himself acquired. He would prob-

Illustribus, 32. Dionysius, vi., 13. Plin., *Hist. Nat.*, xv., 5. See also the singularly ingenious chapter in Niebuhr's posthumous volume, *Die Censur des Q. Fabius und P. Decius.*

[1] Livy, xxvii., 37. [2] Hor., *Carmen Seculare.*

ably introduce some wise and holy pontiff enjoining the magnificent ceremonial which, after a long interval, had at length been adopted. If the poem succeeded, many persons would commit it to memory. Parts of it would be sung to the pipe at banquets. It would be peculiarly interesting to the great Posthumian House, which numbered among its many images that of the Dictator Aulus, the hero of Regillus. The orator who, in the following generation, pronounced the funeral panegyric over the remains of Lucius Posthumius Magellus, thrice Consul, would borrow largely from the lay ; and thus some passages, much disfigured, would probably find their way into the chronicles which were afterwards in the hands of Dionysius and Livy.

Antiquaries differ widely as to the situation of the field of battle. The opinion of those who suppose that the armies met near Cornufelle, between Frascati and the Monte Porzio, is at least plausible, and has been followed in the poem.

As to the details of the battle, it has not been thought desirable to adhere minutely to the accounts which have come down to us. Those accounts, indeed, differ widely from each other, and, in all probability, differ as widely from the ancient poem from which they were originally derived.

It is unnecessary to point out the obvious imitations of the Iliad, which have been purposely introduced.

THE BATTLE OF THE LAKE REGILLUS

A LAY SUNG AT THE FEAST OF CASTOR AND POLLUX
ON THE IDES OF QUINTILIS,
IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCCLI

I

HO, trumpets, sound a war-note !
Ho, lictors, clear the way !
The knights will ride, in all their pride,
Along the streets to-day.
To-day the doors and windows
Are hung with garlands all,
From Castor in the Forum
To Mars without the wall.
Each knight is robed in purple,
With olive each is crowned ;
A gallant war-horse under each
Paws haughtily the ground.
While flows the Yellow River,
While stands the Sacred Hill,
The proud ides of Quintilis
Shall have such honor still.
Gay are the Martian kalends ;
December's nones are gay ;
But the proud ides, when the squadron rides,
Shall be Rome's whitest day.

II

Unto the Great Twin Brethren
We keep this solemn feast.
Swift, swift, the Great Twin Brethren
Came spurring from the east.
They came o'er wild Parthenius
Tossing in waves of pine,
O'er Cirrha's dome, o'er Adria's foam,
O'er purple Apennine,
From where with flutes and dances
Their ancient mansion rings,
In lordly Lacedæmon,
The city of two kings,
To where, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum,
Was fought the glorious fight.

III

Now on the place of slaughter
Are cots and sheepfolds seen,
And rows of vines, and fields of wheat,
And apple-orchards green ;
The swine crush the big acorns
That fall from Corne's oaks ;
Upon the turf by the Fair Fount
The reaper's pottage smokes.
The fisher baits his angle ;
The hunter twangs his bow ;
Little they think on those strong limbs
That moulder deep below.
Little they think how sternly

That day the trumpets pealed ;
How in the slippery swamp of blood
Warrior and war-horse reeled ;
How wolves came with fierce gallop,
And crows on eager wings,
To tear the flesh of captains,
And peck the eyes of kings ;
How thick the dead lay scattered
Under the Porcian height ;
How through the gates of Tusculum
Raved the wild stream of flight ;
And how the Lake Regillus
Bubbled with crimson foam,
What time the Thirty Cities
Came forth to war with Rome.

IV

But, Roman, when thou standest
Upon that holy ground,
Look thou with heed on the dark rock
That girds the dark lake round.
So shalt thou see a hoof-mark
Stamped deep into the flint :
It was no hoof of mortal steed
That made so strange a dint ;
There to the Great Twin Brethren
Vow thou thy vows, and pray
That they, in tempest and in fight,
Will keep thy head alway.

V

Since last the Great Twin Brethren
Of mortal eyes were seen,

Have years gone by a hundred
And fourscore and thirteen.
That summer a Virginius
Was Consul first in place ;
The second was stout Aulus,
Of the Posthumian race.
The Herald of the Latines
From Gabii came in state ;
The Herald of the Latines
Passed through Rome's Eastern Gate ;
The Herald of the Latines
Did in our Forum stand ;
And there he did his office,
A sceptre in his hand.

VI

" Hear, Senators and people
Of the good town of Rome,
The Thirty Cities charge you
To bring the Tarquins home :
And if ye still be stubborn,
To work the Tarquins wrong,
The Thirty Cities warn you,
Look that your walls be strong."

VII

Then spake the Consul Aulus—
He spake a bitter jest—
" Once the jays sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest :
Now yield thou up thine eyry
Unto the carrion-kite,

"'Hear, Senators and people
Of the good town of Rome,
The Thirty Cities charge you
To bring the Tarquins home.'"

Battle of the Lake Regillus, VI.

Or come forth valiantly, and face
The jays in deadly fight.—
Forth looked in wrath the eagle ;
And carrion-kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away.''

VIII

The Herald of the Latines
Hath hied him back in state ;
The Fathers of the City
Are met in high debate.
Then spake the elder Consul,
An ancient man and wise :
'' Now hearken, Conscript Fathers,
To that which I advise.
In seasons of great peril
'T is good that one bear sway ;
Then choose we a Dictator,
Whom all men shall obey.
Camerium knows how deeply
The sword of Aulus bites,
And all our city calls him
The man of seventy fights.
Then let him be Dictator
For six months, and no more ;
And have a Master of the Knights,
And axes twenty-four.''

IX

So Aulus was Dictator,
The man of seventy fights ;

He made Æbutius Elva
His Master of the Knights.
On the third morn thereafter,
At dawning of the day,
Did Aulus and Æbutius
Set forth with their array.
Sempronius Atratinus
Was left in charge at home,
With boys and with gray-headed men
To keep the walls of Rome.
Hard by the Lake Regillus
Our camp was pitched at night ;
Eastward a mile the Latines lay,
Under the Porcian height.
Far over hill and valley
Their mighty host was spread ;
And with their thousand watch-fires
The midnight sky was red.

X

Up rose the golden morning
Over the Porcian height,
The proud ides of Quintilis
Marked evermore with white.
Not without secret trouble
Our bravest saw the foes ;
For girt by threescore thousand spears,
The thirty standards rose.
From every warlike city
That boasts the Latian name,
Foredoomed to dogs and vultures,
That gallant army came :
From Setia's purple vineyards,

From Norba's ancient wall,
From the white streets of Tusculum,
The proudest town of all ;
From where the Witch's Fortress
O'erhangs the dark-blue seas ;
From the still glassy lake that sleeps
Beneath Aricia's trees—
Those trees in whose dim shadow
The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain ;
From the drear banks of Ufens,
Where flights of marsh-fowl play,
And buffaloes lie wallowing
Through the hot summer's day ;
From the gigantic watch-towers,
No work of earthly men,
Whence Cora's sentinels o'erlook
The never-ending fen ;
From the Laurentian jungle,
The wild hog's reedy home ;
From the green steeps whence Anio leaps
In floods of snow-white foam.

XI

Aricia, Cora, Norba,
Velitræ, with the might
Of Setia and of Tusculum,
Were marshalled on the right ;
The leader was Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name ;
Upon his head a helmet
Of red gold shone like flame :

High on a gallant charger
Of dark-gray hue he rode ;
Over his gilded armor
A vest of purple flowed,
Woven in the land of sunrise
By Syria's dark-browed daughters,
And by the sails of Carthage brought
Far o'er the southern waters.

XII

Lavinium and Laurentum
Had on the left their post,
With all the banners of the marsh,
And banners of the coast.
Their leader was false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame ;
With restless pace and haggard face
To his last field he came.
Men said he saw strange visions
Which none besides might see ;
And that strange sounds were in his ears
Which none might hear but he.
A woman fair and stately,
But pale as are the dead,
Oft through the watches of the night
Sat spinning by his bed.
And as she plied the distaff,
In a voice sweet and low,
She sang of great old houses,
And fights fought long ago.
So spun she, and so sang she,
Until the east was gray.

Then pointed to her bleeding breast,
And shrieked, and fled away.

XIII

But in the centre thickest
Were ranged the shields of foes,
And from the centre loudest
The cry of battle rose.
There Tibur marched, and Pedum,
Beneath proud Tarquin's rule,
And Ferentinum of the rock,
And Gabii of the pool.
There rode the Volscian succors ;
There, in a dark stern ring,
The Roman exiles gathered close
Around the ancient King.
Though white as Mount Soracte
When winter nights are long,
His beard flowed down o'er mail and belt,
His heart and hand were strong ;
Under his hoary eyebrows
Still flashed forth quenchless rage ;
And if the lance shook in his gripe,
'T was more with hate than age.
Close at his side was Titus
On an Apulian steed—
Titus, the youngest Tarquin,
Too good for such a breed.

XIV

Now on each side the leaders
Gave signal for the charge ;

And on each side the footmen
Strode on with lance and targe ;
And on each side the horsemen
Struck their spurs deep in gore,
And front to front the armies
Met with a mighty roar ;
And under that great battle
The earth with blood was red ;
And, like the Pomptine fog at morn,
The dust hung overhead ;
And louder still and louder
Rose from the darkened field
The braying of the war-horns,
The clang of sword and shield,
The rush of squadrons sweeping
Like whirlwinds o'er the plain,
The shouting of the slayers,
And screeching of the slain.

XV

False Sextus rode out foremost,
His look was high and bold ;
His corselet was of bison's hide,
Plated with steel and gold.
As glares the famished eagle
From the Digentian rock
On a choice lamb that bounds alone
Before Bandusia's flock,
Herminius glared on Sextus,
And came with eagle speed,
Herminius on black Auster,
Brave champion on brave steed ;
In his right hand the broadsword

That kept the bridge so well,
And on his helm the crown he won
When proud Fidenæ fell.
Woe to the maid whose lover
Shall cross his path to-day !
False Sextus saw and trembled,
And turned and fled away.
As turns, as flies, the woodman
In the Calabrian brake,
When through the reeds gleams the round eye
Of that fell speckled snake,
So turned, so fled, false Sextus,
And hid him in the rear,
Behind the dark Lavinian ranks,
Bristling with crest and spear.

XVI

But far to north Ebutius,
The Master of the Knights,
Gave Tubero of Norba
To feed the Porcian kites.
Next under those red horse-hoofs
Flaccus of Setia lay ;
Better had he been pruning
Among his elms that day.
Mamilius saw the slaughter,
And tossed his golden crest,
And towards the Master of the Knights
Through the thick battle pressed.
Ebutius smote Mamilius
So fiercely on the shield
That the great lord of Tusculum
Well-nigh rolled on the field.

Mamilius smote Æbutius,
With a good aim and true,
Just where the neck and shoulder join,
And pierced him through and through ;
And brave Æbutius Elva
Fell swooning to the ground ;
But a thick wall of bucklers
Encompassed him around.
His clients from the battle
Bare him some little space,
And filled a helm from the dark lake,
And bathed his brow and face ;
And when at last he opened
His swimming eyes to light,
Men say the earliest words he spake
Was, " Friends, how goes the fight ? "

XVII

But meanwhile in the centre
Great deeds of arms were wrought ;
There Aulus the Dictator
And there Valerius fought.
Aulus with his good broadsword
A bloody passage cleared
To where, amidst the thickest foes,
He saw the long white beard.
Flat lighted that good broadsword
Upon proud Tarquin's head.
He dropped the lance ; he dropped the reins ;
He fell as fall the dead.
Down Aulus springs to slay him,
With eyes like coals of fire ;
But faster Titus hath sprung down,

"Latian captains, Roman knights,
Fast down to earth they spring,
And hand to hand, they fight on foot
Around the ancient king."

Battle of the Lake Regillus, XVII.

And hath bestrode his sire.
Latian captains, Roman knights,
Fast down to earth they spring,
And hand to hand they fight on foot
Around the ancient king.
First Titus gave tall Cæso
A death wound in the face ;
Tall Cæso was the bravest man
Of the brave Fabian race ;
Aulus slew Rex of Gabii,
The priest of Juno's shrine ;
Valerius smote down Julius,
Of Rome's great Julian line ;
Julius, who left his mansion,
High on the Velian hill,
And through all turns of weal and woe
Followed proud Tarquin still.
Now right across proud Tarquin
A corpse was Julius laid ;
And Titus groaned with rage and grief,
And at Valerius made.
Valerius struck at Titus,
And lopped off half his crest ;
But Titus stabbed Valerius
A span deep in the breast.
Like a mast snapped by the tempest,
Valerius reeled and fell.
Ah ! woe is me for the good house
That loves the people well !
Then shouted loud the Latines ;
And with one rush they bore
The struggling Romans backward
Three lances' length and more ;

And up they took proud Tarquin,
  And laid him on a shield,
And four strong yeomen bare him,
  Still senseless, from the field.

XVIII

But fiercer grew the fighting
  Around Valerius dead ;
For Titus dragged him by the foot,
  And Aulus by the head.
" On, Latines, on ! " quoth Titus,
  " See how the rebels fly ! "
" Romans, stand firm ! " quoth Aulus,
  " And win this fight or die !
They must not give Valerius
  To raven and to kite ;
For aye Valerius loathed the wrong,
  And aye upheld the right ;
And for your wives and babies
  In the front rank he fell.
Now play the men for the good house
  That loves the people well ! "

XIX

Then tenfold round the body
  The roar of battle rose,
Like the roar of a burning forest,
  When a strong north wind blows.
Now backward, and now forward,
  Rocked furiously the fray,
Till none could see Valerius,
  And none wist where he lay.
For shivered arms and ensigns

Were heaped there in a mound,
And corpses stiff, and dying men
That writhed and gnawed the ground ;
And wounded horses kicking
And snorting purple foam ;
Right well did such a couch befit
A Consular of Rome.

XX

But north looked the Dictator ;
North looked he long and hard,
And spake to Caius Cossus,
The Captain of his Guard :
" Caius, of all the Romans
Thou hast the keenest sight,
Say, what through yonder storm of dust
Comes from the Latian right ? "

XXI

Then answered Caius Cossus :
" I see an evil sight ;
The banner of proud Tusculum
Comes from the Latian right ;
I see the plumèd horsemen ;
And far before the rest
I see the dark-gray charger,
I see the purple vest ;
I see the golden helmet
That shines far off like flame ;
So ever rides Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name."

XXII

"Now hearken, Caius Cossus :
Spring on thy horse's back ;
Ride as the wolves of Apennine
Were all upon thy track ;
Haste to our southward battle ;
And never draw thy rein
Until thou find Herminius,
And bid him come amain."

XXIII

So Aulus spake, and turned him
Again to that fierce strife ;
And Caius Cossus mounted,
And rode for death and life.
Loud clanged beneath his horse-hoofs
The helmets of the dead,
And many a curdling pool of blood
Splashed him from heel to head.
So came he far to southward,
Where fought the Roman host,
Against the banners of the marsh
And banners of the coast.
Like corn before the sickle
The stout Lavinians fell,
Beneath the edge of the true sword
That kept the bridge so well.

XXIV

"Herminius ! Aulus greets thee ;
He bids thee come with speed,
To help our central battle ;
For sore is there our need.

There wars the youngest Tarquin,
And there the Crest of Flame,
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.
Valerius hath fallen fighting
In front of our array ;
And Aulus of the seventy fields
Alone upholds the day."

XXV

Herminius beat his bosom,
But never a word he spake.
He clapped his hand on Auster's mane,
He gave the reins a shake ;
Away, away, went Auster,
Like an arrow from the bow ;
Black Auster was the fleetest steed
From Aufidus to Po.

XXVI

Right glad were all the Romans
Who, in that hour of dread,
Against great odds bare up the war
Around Valerius dead,
When from the south the cheering
Rose with a mighty swell :
" Herminius comes, Herminius,
Who kept the bridge so well ! "

XXVII

Mamilius spied Herminius,
And dashed across the way.

"Herminius! I have sought thee
Through many a bloody day.
One of us two, Herminius,
Shall never more go home.
I will lay on for Tusculum,
And lay thou on for Rome!"

XXVIII

All round them paused the battle,
While met in mortal fray
The Roman and the Tusculan,
The horses black and gray.
Herminius smote Mamilius
Through breastplate and through breast
And fast flowed out the purple blood
Over the purple vest.
Mamilius smote Herminius
Through head-piece and through head;
And side by side those chiefs of pride
Together fell down dead.
Down fell they dead together
In a great lake of gore;
And still stood all who saw them fall
While men might count a score.

XXIX

Fast, fast, with heels wild spurning,
The dark-gray charger fled;
He burst through ranks of fighting-men;
He sprang o'er heaps of dead.
His bridle far outstreaming,
His flanks all blood and foam,

"'One of us two, Herminius,
Shall never more go home.
I will lay on for Tusculum,
And lay thou on for Rome!'"

Battle of the Lake Regillus, XXVII.

He sought the southern mountains,
  The mountains of his home.
The pass was steep and rugged,
  The wolves they howled and whined ;
But he ran like a whirlwind up the pass,
  And he left the wolves behind.
Through many a startled hamlet
  Thundered his flying feet ;
He rushed through the gate of Tusculum,
  He rushed up the long white street ;
He rushed by tower and temple,
  And paused not from his race,
Till he stood before his master's door
  In the stately market-place.
And straightway round him gathered
  A pale and trembling crowd ;
And, when they knew him, cries of rage
  Brake forth, and wailing loud ;
And women rent their tresses
  For their great prince's fall ;
And old men girt on their old swords,
  And went to man the wall.

XXX

But, like a graven image,
  Black Auster kept his place,
And ever wistfully he looked
  Into his master's face.
The raven mane that daily,
  With pats and fond caresses,
The young Herminia washed and combed,
  And twined in even tresses,
And decked with colored ribbons

From her own gay attire,
Hung sadly o'er her father's corpse
In carnage and in mire.
Forth with a shout sprang Titus,
And seized black Auster's rein.
Then Aulus sware a fearful oath,
And ran at him amain.
"The furies of thy brother
With me and mine abide,
If one of your accursed house
Upon black Auster ride!"
As on an Alpine watch-tower
From heaven comes down the flame,
Full on the neck of Titus
The blade of Aulus came;
And out the red blood spouted,
In a wide arch and tall,
As spouts a fountain in the court
Of some rich Capuan's hall.
The knees of all the Latines
Were loosened with dismay,
When dead, on dead Herminius,
The bravest Tarquin lay.

XXXI

And Aulus the Dictator
Stroked Auster's raven mane,
With heed he looked unto the girths,
With heed unto the rein.
"Now bear me well, black Auster,
Into yon thick array;
And thou and I will have revenge
For thy good lord this day."

XXXII

So spake he ; and was buckling
Tighter black Auster's band,
When he was aware of a princely pair
That rode at his right hand.
So like they were, no mortal
Might one from other know ;
White as snow their armor was ;
Their steeds were white as snow.
Never on earthly anvil
Did such rare armor gleam ;
And never did such gallant steeds
Drink of an earthly stream.

XXXIII

And all who saw them trembled,
And pale grew every cheek ;
And Aulus the Dictator
Scarce gathered voice to speak.
" Say by what name men call you ?
What city is your home ?
And wherefore ride ye in such guise
Before the ranks of Rome ? "

XXXIV

" By many names men call us ;
In many lands we dwell :
Well Samothracia knows us ;
Cyrene knows us well.
Our house in gay Tarentum
Is hung each morn with flowers ;
High o'er the masts of Syracuse
Our marble portal towers ;

But by the proud Eurotas
  Is our dear native home ;
And for the right we come to fight
  Before the ranks of Rome."

XXXV

So answered those strange horsemen,
  And each couched low his spear ;
And forthwith all the ranks of Rome
  Were bold and of good cheer ;
And on the thirty armies
  Came wonder and affright,
And Ardea wavered on the left,
  And Cora on the right.
" Rome to the charge ! " cried Aulus ;
  " The foe begins to yield !
Charge for the hearth of Vesta !
  Charge for the Golden Shield !
Let no man stop to plunder,
  But slay, and slay, and slay ;
The gods, who live forever,
  Are on our side to-day."

XXXVI

Then the fierce trumpet-flourish
  From earth to heaven arose,
The kites know well the long stern swell
  That bids the Romans close.
Then the good sword of Aulus
  Was lifted up to slay ;
Then, like a crag down Apennine,
  Rushed Auster through the fray.
But under those strange horsemen

Still thicker lay the slain ;
And after those strange horses
Black Auster toiled in vain.
Behind them Rome's long battle
Came rolling on the foe,
Ensigns dancing wild above,
Blades all in line below.
So comes the Po in flood-time
Upon the Celtic plain ;
So comes the squall, blacker than night,
Upon the Adrian main.
Now, by our sire Quirinus,
It was a goodly sight
To see the thirty standards
Swept down the tide of flight.
So flies the spray of Adria
When the black squall doth blow ;
So corn-sheaves in the flood-time
Spin down the whirling Po.
False Sextus to the mountains
Turned first his horse's head ;
And fast fled Ferentinum,
And fast Lanuvium fled.
The horsemen of Nomentum
Spurred hard out of the fray ;
The footmen of Velitræ
Threw shield and spear away.
And underfoot was trampled,
Amidst the mud and gore,
The banner of proud Tusculum,
That never stooped before ;
And down went Flavius Faustus,
Who led his stately ranks

From where the apple blossoms wave
  On Anio's echoing banks ;
And Tullus of Arpinum,
  Chief of the Volscian aids,
And Metius with the long fair curls,
  The love of Anxur's maids ;
And the white head of Vulso,
  The great Arician seer ;
And Nepos of Laurentum,
  The hunter of the deer ;
And in the back false Sextus
  Felt the good Roman steel,
And wriggling in the dust he died,
  Like a worm beneath the wheel.
And fliers and pursuers
  Were mingled in a mass ;
And far away the battle
  Went roaring through the pass.

XXXVII

Sempronius Atratinus
  Sat in the Eastern Gate,
Beside him were three Fathers,
  Each in his chair of state—
Fabius, whose nine stout grandsons
  That day were in the field,
And Manlius, eldest of the Twelve
  Who keep the Golden Shield ;
And Sergius, the High Pontiff,
  For wisdom far renowned :
In all Etruria's colleges
  Was no such Pontiff found.

And all around the portal,
And high above the wall,
Stood a great throng of people,
But sad and silent all ;
Young lads and stooping elders
That might not bear the mail,
Matrons with lips that quivered,
And maids with faces pale.
Since the first gleam of daylight,
Sempronius had not ceased
To listen for the rushing
Of horse-hoofs from the east.
The mist of eve was rising,
The sun was hastening down,
When he was aware of a princely pair
Fast pricking towards the town.
So like they were, man never
Saw twins so like before ;
Red with gore their armor was,
Their steeds were red with gore.

XXXVIII

" Hail to the great Asylum !
Hail to the hill-tops seven !
Hail to the fire that burns for aye,
And the shield that fell from heaven !
This day, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum
Was fought a glorious fight.
To-morrow your Dictator
Shall bring in triumph home

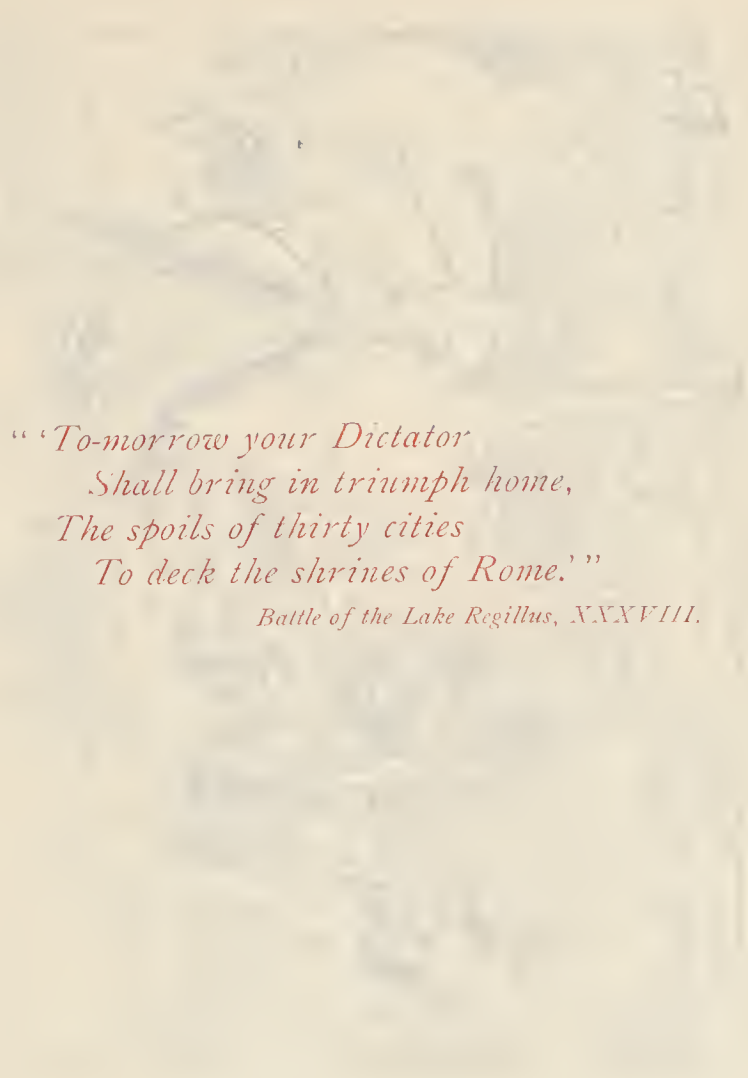
The spoils of thirty cities
To deck the shrines of Rome ! ''

XXXIX

Then burst from that great concourse
A shout that shook the towers,
And some ran north, and some ran south,
Crying, '' The day is ours ! ''
But on rode these strange horsemen,
With slow and lordly pace ;
And none who saw their bearing
Durst ask their name or race.
On rode they to the Forum,
While laurel boughs and flowers,
From house-tops and from windows,
Fell on their crests in showers.
When they drew nigh to Vesta,
They vaulted down amain,
And washed their horses in the well
That springs by Vesta's fane.
And straight again they mounted,
And rode to Vesta's door ;
Then, like a blast, away they passed,
And no man saw them more.

XL

And all the people trembled,
And pale grew every cheek ;
And Sergius the High Pontiff
Alone found voice to speak :
'' The gods who live forever
Have fought for Rome to-day !



"'*To-morrow your Dictator*
Shall bring in triumph home,
The spoils of thirty cities
To deck the shrines of Rome.'"

Battle of the Lake Regillus, XXXVIII.

These be the Great Twin Brethren
To whom the Dorians pray.
Back comes the Chief in triumph,
Who, in the hour of fight,
Hath seen the Great Twin Brethren
In harness on his right.
Safe comes the ship to haven,
Through billows and through gales,
If once the Great Twin Brethren
Sit shining on the sails.
Wherefore they washed their horses
In Vesta's holy well,
Wherefore they rode to Vesta's door,
I know, but may not tell.
Here, hard by Vesta's temple,
Build we a stately dome
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome.
And when the months returning
Bring back this day of fight,
The proud ides of Quintilis,
Marked evermore with white,
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Let all the people throng,
With chaplets and with offerings,
With music and with song ;
And let the doors and windows
Be hung with garlands all,
And let the knights be summoned
To Mars without the wall ;
Thence let them ride in purple
With joyous trumpet-sound,
Each mounted on his war-horse,

And each with olive crowned ;
And pass in solemn order
Before the sacred dome,
Where dwell the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome."

VIRGINIA

A COLLECTION consisting exclusively of war-songs would give an imperfect, or rather an erroneous, notion of the spirit of the old Latin ballads. The patricians, during more than a century after the expulsion of the kings, held all the high military commands. A plebeian, even though, like Lucius Siccius, he were distinguished by his valor and knowledge of war, could serve only in subordinate posts. A minstrel, therefore, who wished to celebrate the early triumphs of his country could hardly take any but patricians for his heroes. The warriors who are mentioned in the two preceding lays—Horatius, Lartius, Herminius, Aulus Posthumius, Æbutius Elva, Sempronius Atratinus, Valerius Poplicola—were all members of the dominant order; and a poet who was singing their praises, whatever his own political opinions might be, would naturally abstain from insulting the class to which they belonged, and from reflecting on the system which had placed such men at the head of the legions of the commonwealth.

But there was a class of compositions in which the great families were by no means so courteously treated. No parts of early Roman history are richer with poeti-

cal coloring than those which relate to the long contest between the privileged houses and the commonalty. The population of Rome was, from a very early period, divided into hereditary castes, which, indeed, readily united to repel foreign enemies, but which regarded each other, during many years, with bitter animosity. Between those castes there was a barrier hardly less strong than that which, at Venice, parted the members of the Great Council from their countrymen. In some respects, indeed, the line which separated an Icilius or a Duilius from a Posthumius or a Fabius was even more deeply marked than that which separated the rower of a gondola from a Contarini or a Morosini. At Venice the distinction was merely civil. At Rome it was both civil and religious. Among the grievances under which the plebeians suffered, three were felt as peculiarly severe. They were excluded from the highest magistracies ; they were excluded from all share in the public lands ; and they were ground down to the dust by partial and barbarous legislation touching pecuniary contracts. The ruling class in Rome was a moneyed class ; and it made and administered the laws with a view solely to its own interest. Thus the relation between lender and borrower was mixed up with the relation between sovereign and subject. The great men held a large portion of the community in dependence by means of advances at enormous usury. The law of debt, framed by creditors, and for the protection of creditors, was the most horrible that has ever been known among men. The liberty and even the life of the insolvent were at the mercy of the patrician moneylenders. Children often became slaves in consequence of the misfortunes of their parents. The debtor was

imprisoned, not in a public jail under the care of impartial public functionaries, but in a private workhouse belonging to the creditor. Frightful stories were told respecting these dungeons. It was said that torture and brutal violation were common ; that tight stocks, heavy chains, scanty measures of food, were used to punish wretches guilty of nothing but poverty; and that brave soldiers whose breasts were covered with honorable scars were often marked still more deeply on the back by the scourges of high-born usurers.

The plebeians were, however, not wholly without constitutional rights. From an early period they had been admitted to some share of political power. They were enrolled each in his century, and were allowed a share, considerable, though not proportioned to their numerical strength, in the disposal of those high dignities from which they were themselves excluded. Thus their position bore some resemblance to that of the Irish Catholics during the interval between the year 1792 and the year 1829. The plebeians had also the privilege of annually appointing officers named tribunes, who had no active share in the government of the commonwealth, but who, by degrees, acquired a power formidable even to the ablest and most resolute consuls and dictators. The person of the tribune was inviolable; and, though he could directly effect little, he could obstruct everything.

During more than a century after the institution of the tribuneship, the commons struggled manfully for the removal of the grievances under which they labored ; and, in spite of many checks and reverses, succeeded in wringing concession after concession from the stubborn aristocracy. At length, in the year of the

city 378, both parties mustered their whole strength for their last and most desperate conflict. The popular and active tribune Caius Licinius proposed the three memorable laws which are called by his name, and which were intended to redress the three great evils of which the plebeians complained. He was supported, with eminent ability and firmness, by his colleague, Lucius Sextius. The struggle appears to have been the fiercest that ever in any community terminated without an appeal to arms. If such a contest had raged in any Greek city, the streets would have run with blood. But, even in the paroxysms of faction, the Roman retained his gravity, his respect for law, and his tenderness for the lives of his fellow-citizens. Year after year Licinius and Sextius were re-elected tribunes. Year after year, if the narrative which has come down to us is to be trusted, they continued to exert, to the full extent, their power of stopping the whole machine of government. No curule magistrates could be chosen; no military muster could be held. We know too little of the state of Rome in those days to be able to conjecture how, during that long anarchy, the peace was kept, and ordinary justice administered between man and man. The animosity of both parties rose to the greatest height. The excitement, we may well suppose, would have been peculiarly intense at the annual election of tribunes. On such occasions there can be little doubt that the great families did all that could be done, by threats and caresses, to break the union of the plebeians. That union, however, proved indissoluble. At length the good cause triumphed. The Licinian laws were carried. Lucius Sextius was the first plebeian consul, Caius Licinius the third.

The results of this great change were singularly happy and glorious. Two centuries of prosperity, harmony, and victory followed the reconciliation of the orders. Men who remembered Rome engaged in waging petty wars almost within sight of the Capitol, lived to see her mistress of Italy. While the disabilities of the plebeians continued, she was scarcely able to maintain her ground against the Volscians and Hernicans. When those disabilities were removed, she rapidly became more than a match for Carthage and Macedon.

During the great Licinian contest the plebeian poets were, doubtless, not silent. Even in modern times songs have been by no means without influence on public affairs; and we may therefore infer that, in a society where printing was unknown and where books were rare, a pathetic or humorous party-ballad must have produced effects such as we can but faintly conceive. It is certain that satirical poems were common at Rome from a very early period. The rustics, who lived at a distance from the seat of government, and took little part in the strife of factions, gave vent to their petty local animosities in coarse Fescennine verse. The lampoons of the city were doubtless of a higher order; and their sting was early felt by the nobility. For in the Twelve Tables, long before the time of the Licinian laws, a severe punishment was denounced against the citizen who should compose or recite verses reflecting on another.[1] Satire is, indeed, the only sort

[1] Cicero justly infers from this law that there had been early Latin poets whose works had been lost before his time. "Quamquam id quidem etiam xii tabulæ declarant, condi jam tum solitum esse carmen, quod ne liceret fieri ad alterius injuriam lege sanxerunt."—*Tusc.*, iv., 2.

of composition in which the Latin poets whose works have come down to us were not mere imitators of foreign models; and it is therefore the only sort of composition in which they have never been rivalled. It was not, like their tragedy, their comedy, their epic and lyric poetry, a hot-house plant which, in return for assiduous and skilful culture, gave only scanty and sickly fruits. It was hardy and full of sap; and in all the various juices which it yielded might be distinguished the flavor of the Ausonian soil. "Satire," said Quintilian, with just pride, "is all our own." Satire sprang, in truth, naturally from the constitution of the Roman government and from the spirit of the Roman people; and, though at length subjected to metrical rules derived from Greece, retained to the last an essentially Roman character. Lucilius was the earliest satirist whose works were held in esteem under the Cæsars. But many years before Lucilius was born, Nævius had been flung into a dungeon, and guarded there with circumstances of unusual rigor, on account of the bitter lines in which he had attacked the great Cæcilian family.[1] The genius and spirit of the Roman satirists survived the liberty of their country, and were not extinguished by the cruel despotism of the Julian and Flavian emperors. The great poet who told the story of Domitian's turbot was the legitimate successor of those forgotten minstrels whose songs animated the factions of the infant republic.

Those minstrels, as Niebuhr has remarked, appear to have generally taken the popular side. We can hardly be mistaken in supposing that, at the great crisis of the civil conflict, they employed themselves in versifying

[1] Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus*. Aulus Gellius, iii.3.

all the most powerful and virulent speeches of the tribunes, and in heaping abuse on the leaders of the aristocracy. Every personal defect, every domestic scandal, every tradition dishonorable to a noble house, would be sought out, brought into notice, and exaggerated. The illustrious head of the aristocratical party, Marcus Furius Camillus, might perhaps be, in some measure, protected by his venerable age and by the memory of his great services to the State. But Appius Claudius Crassus enjoyed no such immunity. He was descended from a long line of ancestors distinguished by their haughty demeanor, and by the inflexibility with which they had withstood all the demands of the plebeian order. While the political conduct and the deportment of the Claudian nobles drew upon them the fiercest public hatred, they were accused of wanting, if any credit is due to the early history of Rome, a class of qualities which, in a military commonwealth, is sufficient to cover a multitude of offences. The chiefs of the family appear to have been eloquent, versed in civil business, and learned after the fashion of their age ; but in war they were not distinguished by skill or valor. Some of them, as if conscious where their weakness lay, had, when filling the highest magistracies, taken internal administration as their department of public business, and left the military command to their colleagues.[1] One of them had been intrusted with an army, and had failed ignominiously.[2] None of them had been honored with a triumph. None of them had achieved any martial exploit, such as those by which Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, Titus Quinctius

[1] In the years of the city, 260, 304, and 330.

[2] In the year of the city, 282.

Capitolinus, Aulus Cornelius Cossus, and, above all, the great Camillus, had extorted the reluctant esteem of the multitude. During the Licinian conflict, Appius Claudius Crassus signalized himself by the ability and severity with which he harangued against the two great agitators. He would naturally, therefore, be the favorite mark of the plebeian satirists ; nor would they have been at a loss to find a point on which he was open to attack.

His grandfather, called, like himself, Appius Claudius, had left a name as much detested as that of Sextus Tarquinius. This elder Appius had been Consul more than seventy years before the introduction of the Licinian laws. By availing himself of a singular crisis in public feeling, he had obtained the consent of the commons to the abolition of the tribuneship, and had been the chief of that Council of Ten to which the whole direction of the State had been committed. In a few months his administration had become universally odious. It had been swept away by an irresistible outbreak of popular fury; and its memory was still held in abhorrence by the whole city. The immediate cause of the downfall of this execrable government was said to have been an attempt made by Appius Claudius upon the chastity of a beautiful young girl of humble birth. The story ran that the Decemvir, unable to succeed by bribes and solicitations, resorted to an outrageous act of tyranny. A vile dependent of the Claudian House laid claim to the damsel as his slave. The cause was brought before the tribunal of Appius. The wicked magistrate, in defiance of the clearest proofs, gave judgment for the claimant. But the girl's father, a brave soldier, saved her from servitude and dishonor by stabbing her to the heart in the sight of the whole Forum.

That blow was the signal for a general explosion. Camp and city rose at once; the Ten were pulled down; the tribuneship was re-established; and Appius escaped the hands of the executioner only by a voluntary death.

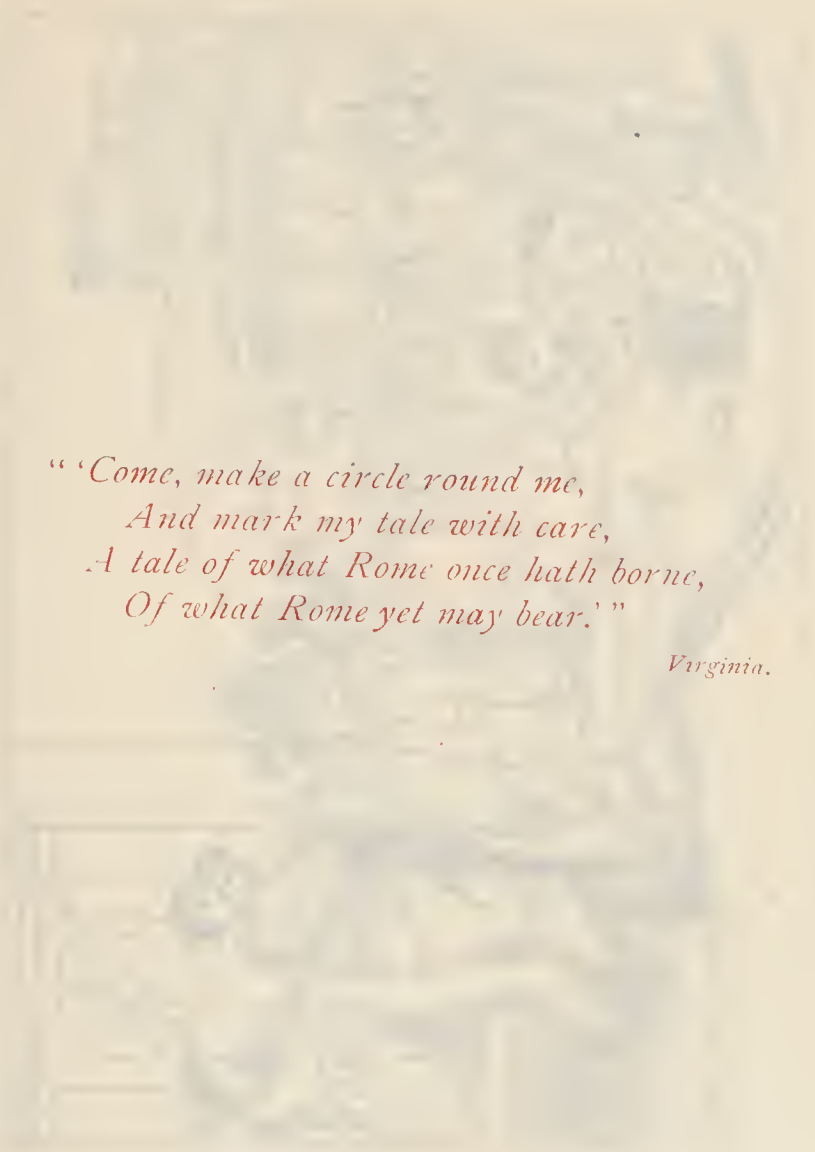
It can hardly be doubted that a story so admirably adapted to the purposes both of the poet and of the demagogue would be eagerly seized upon by minstrels burning with hatred against the patrician order, against the Claudian House, and especially against the grandson and namesake of the infamous Decemvir.

In order that the reader may judge fairly of these fragments of the Lay of Virginia, he must imagine himself a plebeian who has just voted for the re-election of Sextius and Licinius. All the power of the patricians has been exerted to throw out the two great champions of the commons. Every Posthumius, Æmilius, and Cornelius has used his influence to the utmost. Debtors have been let out of the workhouses on condition of voting against the men of the people; clients have been posted to hiss and interrupt the favorite candidates; Appius Claudius Crassus has spoken with more than his usual eloquence and asperity; all has been in vain; Licinius and Sextius have a fifth time carried all the tribes; work is suspended; the booths are closed; the plebeians bear on their shoulders the two champions of liberty through the Forum. Just at this moment it is announced that a popular poet, a zealous adherent of the tribunes, has made a new song which will cut the Claudian nobles to the heart. The crowd gathers round him, and calls on him to recite it. He takes his stand on the spot where, according to tradition, Virginia, more than seventy years ago, was seized by the pander of Appius, and he begins his story.

VIRGINIA

FRAGMENTS OF A LAY SUNG IN THE FORUM ON THE DAY WHEREON LUCIUS SEXTIUS LATERANUS AND CAIUS LICINIUS CALVUS STOLO WERE ELECTED TRIBUNES OF THE COMMONS THE FIFTH TIME, IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLXXXII

YE good men of the commons, with loving hearts and true,
Who stand by the bold tribunes that still have stood by you,
Come, make a circle round me, and mark my tale with care—
A tale of what Rome once hath borne, of what Rome yet may bear.
This is no Grecian fable, of fountains running wine,
Of maids with snaky tresses, or sailors turned to swine.
Here, in this very Forum, under the noonday sun,
In sight of all the people, the bloody deed was done.
Old men still creep among us who saw that fearful day,
Just seventy years and seven ago, when the wicked Ten bare sway.



"'Come, make a circle round me,
And mark my tale with care,
A tale of what Rome once hath borne,
Of what Rome yet may bear.'"

Virginia.

Of all the wicked Ten still the names are held accursed,
And of all the wicked Ten Appius Claudius was the worst.
He stalked along the Forum like King Tarquin in his pride ;
Twelve axes waited on him, six marching on a side ;
The townsmen shrank to right and left, and eyed askance with fear
His lowering brow, his curling mouth which always seemed to sneer :
That brow of hate, that mouth of scorn, marks all the kindred still ;
For never was there Claudius yet but wished the commons ill.
Nor lacks he fit attendance ; for close behind his heels,
With outstretched chin and crouching pace, the client Marcus steals,
His loins girt up to run with speed, be the errand what it may,
And the smile flickering on his cheek, for aught his lord may say.
Such varlets pimp and jest for hire among the lying Greeks ;
Such varlets still are paid to hoot when brave Licinius speaks.
Where'er ye shed the honey, the buzzing flies will crowd ;
Where'er ye fling the carrion, the raven's croak is loud ;
Where'er down Tiber garbage floats, the greedy pike ye see ;

And wheresoe'er such lord is found, such client still will be.

Just then, as through one cloudless chink in a black stormy sky
Shines out the dewy morning-star, a fair young girl came by.
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Home she went bounding from the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm ;
And past those dreaded axes she innocently ran,
With bright, frank brow that had not learned to blush at gaze of man ;
And up the Sacred Street she turned, and, as she danced along,
She warbled gayly to herself lines of the good old song,
How for a sport the princes came spurring from the camp,
And found Lucrece, combing the fleece, under the midnight lamp.
The maiden sang as sings the lark when up he darts his flight
From his nest in the green April corn to meet the morning light ;
And Appius heard her sweet young voice, and saw her sweet young face,
And loved her with the accursèd love of his accursèd race ;
And all along the Forum, and up the Sacred Street,
His vulture eye pursued the trip of those small glancing feet.

. . . . . .

Over the Alban mountains the light of morning
broke ;
From all the roofs of the Seven Hills curled the thin
wreaths of smoke :
The city gates were opened ; the Forum, all alive
With buyers and with sellers, was humming like a
hive ;
Blithely on brass and timber the craftsman's stroke was
ringing,
And blithely o'er her panniers the market-girl was
singing,
And blithely young Virginia came smiling from her
home ;
Ah ! woe for young Virginia, the sweetest maid in
Rome !
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on
her arm,
Forth she went bounding to the school, nor dreamed
of shame or harm.
She crossed the Forum shining with stalls in alleys
gay,
And just had reached the very spot whereon I stand
this day,
When up the varlet Marcus came ; not such as when
erewhile
He crouched behind his patron's heels with the true
client smile ;
He came with lowering forehead, swollen features, and
clenched fist,
And strode across Virginia's path, and caught her by
the wrist.
Hard strove the frighted maiden, and screamed with
look aghast ;

And at her scream from right and left the folk came
running fast ;
The money-changer Crispus, with his thin silver
hairs ;
And Hanno, from the stately booth glittering with
Punic wares ;
And the strong smith Muræna, grasping a half-forged
brand ;
And Volero the flesher, his cleaver in his hand.
All came in wrath and wonder, for all knew that fair
child ;
And, as she passed them twice a day, all kissed their
hands and smiled ;
And the strong smith Muræna gave Marcus such a
blow,
The caitiff reeled three paces back, and let the maiden
go.
Yet glared he fiercely round him, and growled in harsh,
fell tone.
" She 's mine, and I will have her ; I seek but for mine
own.
She is my slave, born in my house, and stolen away
and sold,
The year of the sore sickness, ere she was twelve hours
old.
'T was in the sad September, the month of wail and
fright,
Two augurs were borne forth that morn ; the Consul
died ere night.
I wait on Appius Claudius, I waited on his sire ;
Let him who works the client wrong beware the
patron's ire ! "

So spake the varlet Marcus; and dread and silence came
On all the people at the sound of the great Claudian name.
For then there was no tribune to speak the word of might,
Which makes the rich man tremble, and guards the poor man's right.
There was no brave Licinius, no honest Sextius then;
But all the city, in great fear, obeyed the wicked Ten.
Yet ere the varlet Marcus again might seize the maid,
Who clung tight to Muræna's skirt, and sobbed, and shrieked for aid,
Forth through the throng of gazers the young Icilius pressed,
And stamped his foot, and rent his gown, and smote upon his breast,
And sprang upon that column, by many a minstrel sung,
Whereon three mouldering helmets, three rusting swords, are hung,
And beckoned to the people, and in bold voice and clear
Poured thick and fast the burning words which tyrants quake to hear:

"Now, by your children's cradles, now by your fathers' graves,
Be men to-day, Quirites, or be forever slaves!
For this did Servius give us laws? For this did Lucrece bleed?
For this was the great vengeance wrought on Tarquin's evil seed?

For this did those false sons make red the axes of their sire ?
For this did Scævola's right hand hiss in the Tuscan fire ?
Shall the vile fox-earth awe the race that stormed the lion's den ?
Shall we, who could not brook one lord, crouch to the wicked Ten ?
Oh for that ancient spirit which curbed the Senate's will !
Oh for the tents which in old time whitened the Sacred Hill !
In those brave days our fathers stood firmly side by side ;
They faced the Marcian fury ; they tamed the Fabian pride ;
They drove the fiercest Quinctius an outcast forth from Rome ;
They sent the haughtiest Claudius with shivered fasces home.
But what their care bequeathed us our madness flung away;
All the ripe fruit of threescore years was blighted in a day.
Exult, ye proud patricians ! The hard-fought fight is o'er.
We strove for honors—'t was in vain ; for freedom—'t is no more.
No crier to the polling summons the eager throng ;
No tribune breathes the word of might that guards the weak from wrong.
Our very hearts, that were so high, sink down beneath your will.

Riches and lands, and power and state—ye have them ; keep them still.
Still keep the holy fillets ; still keep the purple gown,
The axes, and the curule chair, the car and laurel crown ;
Still press us for your cohorts, and, when the fight is done,
Still fill your garners from the soil which our good swords have won.
Still, like a spreading ulcer, which leech-craft may not cure,
Let your foul usance eat away the substance of the poor.
Still let your haggard debtors bear all their fathers bore;
Still let your dens of torment be noisome as of yore ;
No fire when Tiber freezes ; no air in dog-star heat ;
And store of rods for free-born backs, and holes for free-born feet.
Heap heavier still the fetters ; bar closer still the grate ;
Patient as sheep we yield us up unto your cruel hate.
But, by the shades beneath us, and by the gods above,
Add not unto your cruel hate your yet more cruel love !
Have ye not graceful ladies, whose spotless lineage springs
From consuls and high pontiffs and ancient Alban kings—
Ladies who deign not on our paths to set their tender feet,
Who from their cars look down with scorn upon the wondering street,
Who in Corinthian mirrors their own proud smiles behold,

And breathe of Capuan odors, and shine with Spanish gold ?
Then leave the poor plebeian his single tie to life—
The sweet, sweet love of daughter, of sister, and of wife ;
The gentle speech, the balm for all that his vexed soul endures ;
The kiss, in which he half forgets even such a yoke as yours.
Still let the maiden's beauty swell the father's breast with pride ;
Still let the bridegroom's arms infold an unpolluted bride.
Spare us the inexpiable wrong, the unutterable shame,
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame,
Lest, when our latest hope is fled, ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof, in some wild hour, how much the wretched dare.''

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Straightway Virginius led the maid a little space aside,
To where the reeking shambles stood, piled up with horn and hide,
Close to yon low dark archway, where, in a crimson flood,
Leaps down to the great sewer the gurgling stream of blood.
Hard by, a flesher on a block had laid his whittle down ;

Virginius caught the whittle up, and hid it in his gown.
And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, "Farewell, sweet child! Farewell!
Oh! how I loved my darling! Though stern I sometimes be,
To thee, thou know'st, I was not so. Who could be so to thee?
And how my darling loved me! How glad she was to hear
My footstep on the threshold when I came back last year!
And how she danced with pleasure to see my civic crown,
And took my sword, and hung it up, and brought me forth my gown!
Now, all those things are over—yes, all thy pretty ways,
Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays;
And none will grieve when I go forth, or smile when I return,
Or watch beside the old man's bed, or weep upon his urn.
The house that was the happiest within the Roman walls,
The house that envied not the wealth of Capua's marble halls,
Now, for the brightness of thy smile, must have eternal gloom;
And for the music of thy voice, the silence of the tomb.

The time is come. See how he points his eager hand
this way !
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon
the prey !
With all his wit, he little deems that, spurned, be-
trayed, bereft,
Thy father hath in his despair one fearful refuge left.
He little deems that in this hand I clutch what still can
save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion
of the slave ;
Yea, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and
blow—
Foul outrage which thou knowest not, which thou
shalt never know.
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me
one more kiss ;
And now, mine own dear little girl, there is no way but
this."
With that he lifted high the steel, and smote her in the
side,
And in her blood she sank to earth, and with one sob
she died.

Then, for a little moment, all people held their breath;
And through the crowded Forum was stillness as of
death ;
And in another moment brake forth from one and all
A cry as if the Volscians were coming o'er the wall.
Some with averted faces, shrieking, fled home amain ;
Some ran to call a leech, and some ran to lift the slain :
Some felt her lips and little wrist, if life might there be
found ;

And some tore up their garments fast, and strove to
stanch the wound.
In vain they ran and felt and stanched; for never truer
blow
That good right arm had dealt in fight against a
Volscian foe.

When Appius Claudius saw that deed, he shuddered
and sank down,
And hid his face some little space with the corner of
his gown,
Till, with white lips and bloodshot eyes, Virginius tot-
tered nigh,
And stood before the judgment-seat, and held the knife
on high.
" O dwellers in the nether gloom, avengers of the slain,
By this dear blood I cry to you, do right between us
twain ;
And even as Appius Claudius hath dealt by me and
mine,
Deal you by Appius Claudius and all the Claudian
line ! "
So spake the slayer of his child, and turned and went
his way ;
But first he cast one haggard glance to where the body
lay,
And writhed, and groaned a fearful groan, and then,
with steadfast feet,
Strode right across the market-place unto the Sacred
Street.

Then up sprang Appius Claudius : " Stop him, alive
or dead !

Ten thousand pounds of copper to the man who brings
his head."
He looked upon his clients ; but none would work his
will.
He looked upon his lictors ; but they trembled, and
stood still.
And, as Virginius through the press his way in silence
cleft,
Ever the mighty multitude fell back to right and left.
And he hath passed in safety unto his woful home,
And there ta'en horse to tell the camp what deeds are
done in Rome.

By this the flood of people was swollen from every
side,
And streets and porches round were filled with that
o'erflowing tide ;
And close around the body gathered a little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain.
They brought a bier, and hung it with many a cypress
crown,
And gently they uplifted her, and gently laid her
down.
The face of Appius Claudius wore the Claudian scowl
and sneer,
And in the Claudian note he cried, " What doth this
rabble here ?
Have they no crafts to mind at home, that hitherward
they stray ?
Ho ! lictors, clear the market-place, and fetch the
corpse away ! "
The voice of grief and fury till then had not been loud;
But a deep sullen murmur wandered among the crowd,

Like the moaning noise that goes before the whirlwind on the deep,
Or the growl of a fierce watch-dog but half aroused from sleep.
But when the lictors at that word, tall yeomen all and strong,
Each with his axe and sheaf of twigs, went down into the throng,
Those old men say who saw that day of sorrow and of sin
That in the Roman Forum was never such a din.
The wailing, hooting, cursing, the howls of grief and hate,
Were heard beyond the Pincian Hill, beyond the Latin Gate.
But close around the body, where stood the little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain,
No cries were there, but teeth set fast, low whispers, and black frowns,
And breaking-up of benches and girding-up of gowns.
'T was well the lictors might not pierce to where the maiden lay,
Else surely had they been all twelve torn limb from limb that day.
Right glad they were to struggle back, blood streaming from their heads,
With axes all in splinters, and raiment all in shreds.
Then Appius Claudius gnawed his lip, and the blood left his cheek ;
And thrice he beckoned with his hand, and thrice he strove to speak ;
And thrice the tossing Forum set up a frightful yell :

"See, see, thou dog! what thou hast done, and hide thy shame in hell!
Thou that wouldst make our maidens slaves must first make slaves of men.
Tribunes! Hurrah for tribunes! Down with the wicked Ten!"
And straightway, thick as hailstones, came whizzing through the air
Pebbles and bricks and potsherds all round the curule chair;
And upon Appius Claudius great fear and trembling came,
For never was a Claudius yet brave against aught but shame.
Though the great houses love us not, we own, to do them right,
That the great houses, all save one, have borne them well in fight.
Still Caius of Corioli, his triumphs and his wrongs,
His vengeance and his mercy, live in our camp-fire songs.
Beneath the yoke of Furius oft have Gaul and Tuscan bowed;
And Rome may bear the pride of him of whom herself is proud.
But evermore a Claudius shrinks from a stricken field,
And changes color like a maid at sight of sword and shield.
The Claudian triumphs all were won within the city towers;
The Claudian yoke was never pressed on any necks but ours.
A Cossus, like a wild-cat, springs ever at the face;

A Fabius rushes like a boar against the shouting chase ;
But the vile Claudian litter, raging with currish spite,
Still yelps and snaps at those who run, still runs from those who smite.
So now 't was seen of Appius. When stones began to fly,
He shook and crouched, and wrung his hands, and smote upon his thigh.
" Kind clients, honest lictors, stand by me in this fray!
Must I be torn in pieces? Home, home, the nearest way ! "
While yet he spake, and looked around with a bewildered stare,
Four sturdy lictors put their necks beneath the curule chair ;
And fourscore clients on the left, and fourscore on the right,
Arrayed themselves with swords and staves, and loins girt up for fight.
But, though without or staff or sword, so furious was the throng
That scarce the train with might and main could bring their lord along.
Twelve times the crowd made at him ; five times they seized his gown ;
Small chance was his to rise again if once they got him down ;
And sharper came the pelting, and evermore the yell—
" Tribunes ! we will have tribunes ! "—rose with a louder swell :
And the chair tossed as tosses a bark with tattered sail
When raves the Adriatic beneath an eastern gale,

When the Calabrian sea-marks are lost in clouds of spume,
And the great Thunder-cape has donned his veil of inky gloom.
One stone hit Appius in the mouth, and one beneath the ear ;
And ere he reached Mount Palatine, he swooned with pain and fear.
His cursèd head, that he was wont to hold so high with pride,
Now, like a drunken man's, hung down, and swayed from side to side ;
And when his stout retainers had brought him to his door,
His face and neck were all one cake of filth and clotted gore.
As Appius Claudius was that day, so may his grandson be !
God send Rome one such other sight, and send me there to see !

. . . . . .

THE PROPHECY OF CAPYS

IT can hardly be necessary to remind any reader that, according to the popular tradition, Romulus, after he had slain his granduncle Amulius, and restored his grandfather Numitor, determined to quit Alba, the hereditary domain of the Sylvian princes, and to found a new city. The gods, it was added, vouchsafed the clearest signs of the favor with which they regarded the enterprise, and of the high destinies reserved for the young colony.

This event was likely to be a favorite theme of the old Latin minstrels. They would naturally attribute the project of Romulus to some divine intimation of the power and prosperity which it was decreed that his city should attain. They would probably introduce seers foretelling the victories of unborn consuls and dictators, and the last great victory would generally occupy the most conspicuous place in the prediction. There is nothing strange in the supposition that the poet who was employed to celebrate the first great triumph of the Romans over the Greeks might throw his song of exultation into this form.

The occasion was one likely to excite the strongest feelings of national pride. A great outrage had been followed by a great retribution. Seven years before

this time, Lucius Posthumius Megellus, who sprang from one of the noblest houses of Rome, and had been thrice Consul, was sent ambassador to Tarentum, with charge to demand reparation for grievous injuries. The Tarentines gave him audience in their theatre, where he addressed them in such Greek as he could command, which, we may well believe, was not exactly such as Cineas would have spoken. An exquisite sense of the ridiculous belonged to the Greek character; and closely connected with this faculty was a strong propensity to flippancy and impertinence. When Posthumius placed an accent wrong, his hearers burst into a laugh. When he remonstrated, they hooted him, and called him barbarian; and at length hissed him off the stage as if he had been a bad actor. As the grave Roman retired, a buffoon who, from his constant drunkenness, was nicknamed the Pint-pot, came up with gestures of the grossest indecency, and bespattered the senatorial gown with filth. Posthumius turned round to the multitude, and held up the gown, as if appealing to the universal law of nations. The sight only increased the insolence of the Tarentines. They clapped their hands, and set up a shout of laughter which shook the theatre. "Men of Tarentum," said Posthumius, "it will take not a little blood to wash this gown." [1]

Rome, in consequence of this insult, declared war against the Tarentines. The Tarentines sought for allies beyond the Ionian Sea. Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, came to their help with a large army; and, for the first time, the two great nations of antiquity were fairly matched against each other.

[1] Dion. Hal. *De Legationibus.*

The fame of Greece in arms as well as in arts was then at the height. Half a century earlier, the career of Alexander had excited the admiration and terror of all nations from the Ganges to the Pillars of Hercules. Royal houses, founded by Macedonian captains, still reigned at Antioch and Alexandria. That barbarian warriors, led by barbarian chiefs, should win a pitched battle against Greek valor, guided by Greek science, seemed as incredible as it would now seem that the Burmese or the Siamese should, in the open plain, put to flight an equal number of the best English troops. The Tarentines were convinced that their countrymen were irresistible in war ; and this conviction had emboldened them to treat with the grossest indignity one whom they regarded as the representative of an inferior race. Of the Greek generals then living, Pyrrhus was indisputably the first. Among the troops who were trained in the Greek discipline his Epirotes ranked high. His expedition to Italy was a turning-point in the history of the world. He found there a people who, far inferior to the Athenians and Corinthians in the fine arts, in the speculative sciences, and in all the refinements of life, were the best soldiers on the face of the earth. Their arms, their gradations of rank, their order of battle, their method of intrenchment, were all of Latin origin, and had all been gradually brought near to perfection, not by the study of foreign models, but by the genius and experience of many generations of great native commanders. The first words which broke from the King, when his practised eye had surveyed the Roman encampment, were full of meaning : " These barbarians," he said, " have nothing barbarous in their military arrangements."

He was at first victorious; for his own talents were superior to those of the captains who were opposed to him; and the Romans were not prepared for the onset of the elephants of the East, which were then for the first time seen in Italy—moving mountains, with long snakes for hands.[1] But the victories of the Epirotes were fiercely disputed, dearly purchased, and altogether unprofitable. At length, Manius Curius Dentatus, who had in his first consulship won two triumphs, was again placed at the head of the Roman commonwealth, and sent to encounter the invaders. A great battle was fought near Beneventum. Pyrrhus was completely defeated. He repassed the sea; and the world learned, with amazement, that a people had been discovered who, in fair fighting, were superior to the best troops that had been drilled on the system of Parmenio and Antigonus.

The conquerors had a good right to exult in their success; for their glory was all their own. They had not learned from their enemy how to conquer him. It was with their own national arms, and in their own national battle-array, that they had overcome weapons and tactics long believed to be invincible. The pilum and the broadsword had vanquished the Macedonian spear. The legion had broken the Macedonian phalanx. Even the elephants, when the surprise produced by their first appearance was over, could cause no disorder in the steady yet flexible battalions of Rome.

It is said by Florus, and may easily be believed, that the triumph far surpassed in magnificence any that

[1] *Anguimanus* is the old Latin epithet for an elephant. Lucretius, ii. 538, v. 1302.

Rome had previously seen. The only spoils which Papirius Cursor and Fabius Maximus could exhibit were flocks and herds, wagons of rude structure, and heaps of spears and helmets. But now, for the first time, the riches of Asia and the arts of Greece adorned a Roman pageant. Plate, fine stuffs, costly furniture, rare animals, exquisite paintings and sculptures, formed part of the procession. At the banquet would be assembled a crowd of warriors and statesmen, among whom Manius Curius Dentatus would take the highest room. Caius Fabricius Luscinus, then, after two consulships and two triumphs, Censor of the Commonwealth, would doubtless occupy a place of honor at the board. In situations less conspicuous probably lay some of those who were, a few years later, the terror of Carthage—Caius Duilius, the founder of the maritime greatness of his country; Marcus Atilius Regulus, who owed to defeat a renown far higher than that which he had derived from his victories; and Caius Lutatius Catulus, who, while suffering from a grievous wound, fought the great battle of the Ægates, and brought the first Punic war to a triumphant close. It is impossible to recount the names of these eminent citizens without reflecting that they were all, without exception, plebeians, and would, but for the ever-memorable struggle maintained by Caius Licinius and Lucius Sextius, have been doomed to hide in obscurity, or to waste in civil broils, the capacity and energy which prevailed against Pyrrhus and Hamilcar.

On such a day we may suppose that the patriotic enthusiasm of a Latin poet would vent itself in reiterated shouts of *Io triumphe*, such as were uttered by Horace on a far less exciting occasion, and in boasts resembling

those which Virgil put into the mouth of Anchises. The superiority of some foreign nations, and especially of the Greeks, in the lazy arts of peace, would be admitted with disdainful candor; but pre-eminence in all the qualities which fit a people to subdue and govern mankind would be claimed for the Romans.

The following lay belongs to the latest age of Latin ballad-poetry. Nævius and Livius Andronicus were probably among the children whose mothers held them up to see the chariot of Curius go by. The minstrel who sang on that day might possibly have lived to read the first hexameters of Ennius, and to see the first comedies of Plautus. His poem, as might be expected, shows a much wider acquaintance with the geography, manners, and productions of remote nations than would have been found in compositions of the age of Camillus. But he troubles himself little about dates, and, having heard travellers talk with admiration of the Colossus of Rhodes, and of the structures and gardens with which the Macedonian kings of Syria had embellished their residence on the banks of the Orontes, he has never thought of inquiring whether these things existed in the age of Romulus.

THE PROPHECY OF CAPYS

A LAY SUNG AT THE BANQUET IN THE CAPITOL ON THE DAY WHEREON MANIUS CURIUS DENTATUS, A SECOND TIME CONSUL, TRIUMPHED OVER KING PYRRHUS AND THE TARENTINES, IN THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCCLXXIX

I

NOW slain is King Amulius,
Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa
On the throne of Aventine.
Slain is the Pontiff Camers,
Who spake the words of doom :
" The children to the Tiber,
The mother to the tomb."

II

In Alba's lake no fisher
His net to-day is flinging ;
On the dark rind of Alba's oaks
To-day no axe is ringing ;
The yoke hangs o'er the manger,
The scythe lies in the hay ;
Through all the Alban villages
No work is done to-day.

III

And every Alban burgher
  Hath donned his whitest gown ;
And every head in Alba
  Weareth a poplar crown ;
And every Alban door-post
  With boughs and flowers is gay ;
For to-day the dead are living,
  The lost are found to-day.

IV

They were doomed by a bloody king,
  They were doomed by a lying priest ;
They were cast on the raging flood,
  They were tracked by the raging beast :
Raging beast and raging flood
  Alike have spared the prey ;
And to-day the dead are living,
  The lost are found to-day.

V

The troubled river knew them,
  And smoothed his yellow foam,
And gently rocked the cradle
  That bore the fate of Rome.
The ravening she-wolf knew them,
  And licked them o'er and o'er,
And gave them of her own fierce milk,
  Rich with raw flesh and gore.
Twenty winters, twenty springs,
  Since then have rolled away ;
And to-day the dead are living,
  The lost are found to-day.

VI

Blithe it was to see the twins,
Right goodly youths and tall,
Marching from Alba Longa
To their old grandsire's hall.
Along their path fresh garlands
Are hung from tree to tree ;
Before them stride the pipers,
Piping a note of glee.

VII

On the right goes Romulus,
With arms to the elbows red,
And in his hand a broadsword,
And on the blade a head—
A head in an iron helmet,
With horse-hair hanging down,
A shaggy head, a swarthy head,
Fixed in a ghastly frown—
The head of King Amulius,
Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa
On the throne of Aventine.

VIII

On the left side goes Remus,
With wrists and fingers red,
And in his hand a boar-spear,
And on the point a head—
A wrinkled head and aged,
With silver beard and hair,
And holy fillets round it,
Such as the pontiffs wear—

The head of ancient Camers,
  Who spake the words of doom :
" The children to the Tiber ;
  The mother to the tomb."

IX

Two and two behind the twins
  Their trusty comrades go,
Four-and-forty valiant men,
  With club and axe and bow.
On each side every hamlet
  Pours forth its joyous crowd,
Shouting lads and baying dogs,
  And children laughing loud,
And old men weeping fondly
  As Rhea's boys go by,
And maids who shriek to see the heads,
  Yet shrieking, press more nigh.

X

So they marched along the lake ;
  They marched by fold and stall,
By cornfield and by vineyard,
  Unto the old man's hall.

XI

In the hall-gate sat Capys,
  Capys, the sightless seer ;
From head to foot he trembled
  As Romulus drew near.
And up stood stiff his thin white hair,
  And his blind eyes flashed fire :

"On the right goes Romulus,
With arms to the elbows red,
And in his hand a broadsword,
And on the blade a head."

The Prophecy of Capys, VII.

MONS
PALATINVS

" Hail ! foster-child of the wondrous nurse !
Hail ! son of the wondrous sire !

XII

" But thou—what dost thou here
In the old man's peaceful hall ?
What doth the eagle in the coop,
The bison in the stall ?
Our corn fills many a garner ;
Our vines clasp many a tree ;
Our flocks are white on many a hill ;
But these are not for thee.

XIII

" For thee no treasure ripens
In the Tartessian mine ;
For thee no ship brings precious bales
Across the Libyan brine ;
Thou shalt not drink from amber,
Thou shalt not rest on down ;
Arabia shall not steep thy locks,
Nor Sidon tinge thy gown.

XIV

" Leave gold and myrrh and jewels,
Rich table and soft bed,
To them who of man's seed are born,
Whom woman's milk hath fed.
Thou wast not made for lucre,
For pleasure, nor for rest ;
Thou, that art sprung from the War-god's loins,
And hast tugged at the she-wolf's breast.

XV

" From sunrise unto sunset
All earth shall hear thy fame ;
A glorious city thou shalt build,
And name it by thy name :
And there, unquenched through ages,
Like Vesta's sacred fire,
Shall live the spirit of thy nurse,
The spirit of thy sire.

XVI

" The ox toils through the furrow,
Obedient to the goad
The patient ass, up flinty paths,
Plods with his weary load ;
With whine and bound the spaniel
His master's whistle hears ;
And the sheep yields her patiently
To the loud clashing shears.

XVII

" But thy nurse will hear no master,
Thy nurse will bear no load ;
And woe to them that shear her,
And woe to them that goad !
When all the pack, loud baying,
Her bloody lair surrounds,
She dies in silence, biting hard,
Amidst the dying hounds.

XVIII

" Pomona loves the orchard ;
And Liber loves the vine ;

And Pales loves the straw-built shed
  Warm with the breath of kine ;
And Venus loves the whispers
  Of plighted youth and maid,
In April's ivory moonlight
  Beneath the chestnut shade.

XIX

" But thy father loves the clashing
  Of broadsword and of shield ;
He loves to drink the steam that reeks
  From the fresh battle-field ;
He smiles a smile more dreadful
  Than his own dreadful frown
When he sees the thick black cloud of smoke
  Go up from the conquered town.

XX

" And such as is the War-god,
  The author of thy line,
And such as she who suckled thee,
  Even such be thou and thine.
Leave to the soft Campanian
  His baths and his perfumes ;
Leave to the sordid race of Tyre
  Their dyeing-vats and looms ;
Leave to the sons of Carthage
  The rudder and the oar ;
Leave to the Greek his marble nymphs
  And scrolls of wordy lore.

XXI

" Thine, Roman, is the pilum ;
  Roman, the sword is thine,

The even trench, the bristling mound,
The legion's ordered line ;
And thine the wheels of triumph
Which with their laurelled train
Move slowly up the shouting streets
To Jove's eternal fane.

XXII

" Beneath thy yoke the Volscian
Shall vail his lofty brow ;
Soft Capua's curled revellers
Before thy chairs shall bow ;
The Lucumoes of Arnus
Shall quake thy rods to see ;
And the proud Samnite's heart of steel
Shall yield to only thee.

XXIII

" The Gaul shall come against thee
From the land of snow and night ;
Thou shalt give his fair-haired armies
To the raven and the kite.

XXIV

" The Greek shall come against thee,
The conqueror of the East.
Beside him stalks to battle
The huge earth-shaking beast—
The beast on whom the castle
With all its guards doth stand,
The beast who hath between his eyes
The serpent for a hand.

First march the bold Epirotes,
  Wedged close with shield and spear,
And the ranks of false Tarentum
  Are glittering in the rear.

XXV

" The ranks of false Tarentum
  Like hunted sheep shall fly ;
In vain the bold Epirotes
  Shall round their standards die :
And Apennine's gray vultures
  Shall have a noble feast
On the fat and on the eyes
  Of the huge earth-shaking beast.

XXVI

" Hurrah for the good weapons
  That keep the War-god's land !
Hurrah for Rome's stout pilum
  In a stout Roman hand !
Hurrah for Rome's short broadsword
  That through the thick array
Of levelled spears and serried shields
  Hews deep its gory way !

XXVII

" Hurrah for the great triumph
  That stretches many a mile !
Hurrah for the wan captives
  That pass in endless file !
Ho ! bold Epirotes, whither
  Hath the Red King ta'en flight ?

Ho ! dogs of false Tarentum,
Is not the gown washed white ?

XXVIII

" Hurrah for the great triumph
That stretches many a mile !
Hurrah for the rich dye of Tyre,
And the fine web of Nile,
The helmets gay with plumage
Torn from the pheasant's wings,
The belts set thick with starry gems
That shone on Indian kings,
The urns of massy silver,
The goblets rough with gold,
The many-colored tablets bright
With loves and wars of old,
The stone that breathes and struggles,
The brass that seems to speak !—
Such cunning they who dwell on high
Have given unto the Greek.

XXIX

" Hurrah for Manius Curius,
The bravest son of Rome,
Thrice in utmost need sent forth,
Thrice drawn in triumph home !
Weave, weave, for Manius Curius
The third embroidered gown ;
Make ready the third lofty car,
And twine the third green crown ;
And yoke the steeds of Rosea
With necks like a bended bow ;

And deck the bull, Mevania's bull,
The bull as white as snow.

XXX

" Blest and thrice blest the Roman
Who sees Rome's brightest day,
Who sees that long victorious pomp
Wind down the Sacred Way,
And through the bellowing Forum,
And round the Suppliant's Grove,
Up to the everlasting gates
Of Capitolian Jove.

XXXI

" Then where, o'er two bright havens,
The towers of Corinth frown ;
Where the gigantic King of Day
On his own Rhodes looks down ;
Where soft Orontes murmurs
Beneath the laurel shades ;
Where Nile reflects the endless length
Of dark-red colonnades ;
Where in the still deep water,
Sheltered from waves and blasts,
Bristles the dusky forest
Of Byrsa's thousand masts ;
Where fur-clad hunters wander
Amidst the northern ice ;
Where through the sand of Morning-land
The camel bears the spice ;
Where Atlas flings his shadow
Far o'er the western foam,
Shall be great fear on all who hear
The mighty name of Rome."

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS, INSCRIPTIONS, ETC.

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EPITAPH ON HENRY MARTYN (1812)

HERE Martyn lies. In manhood's early bloom
The Christian hero finds a pagan tomb.
Religion, sorrowing o'er her favorite son,
Points to the glorious trophies that he won.
Eternal trophies ! not with carnage red,
Not stained with tears by hapless captives shed,
But trophies of the Cross ! For that dear name,
Through every form of danger, death, and shame,
Onward he journeyed to a happier shore,
Where danger, death, and shame assault no more.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF PITT (1813)

O BRITAIN, dear isle ! when the annals of story
Shall tell of the deeds that thy children have done,
When the strains of each poet shall sing of their glory,
And the triumphs their skill and their valor have won ;

When the olive and palm in thy chaplet are blended,
When thy arts and thy fame and thy commerce increase,
When thy arms through the uttermost coasts are extended,
And thy war is triumphant, and happy thy peace ;

When the ocean, whose waves like a rampart flow round thee,
Conveying thy mandates to every shore,
And the empire of nature no longer can bound thee,
And the world be the scene of thy conquests no more;

Remember the man who in sorrow and danger,
When thy glory was set and thy spirit was low,

When thy hopes were o'erturned by the arms of the
stranger,
And thy banners displayed in the halls of the foe,

Stood forth in the tempest of doubt and disaster,
Unaided and single, the danger to brave,
Asserted thy claims and the rights of his master,
Preserved thee to conquer, and saved thee to save.

A RADICAL WAR-SONG (1820)

AWAKE, arise, the hour is come
For rows and revolutions ;
There 's no receipt like pike and drum
For crazy constitutions.
Close, close the shop ! Break, break the loom,
Desert your hearths and furrows,
And throng in arms to seal the doom
Of England's rotten boroughs.

We 'll stretch that tort'ring Castlereagh
On his own Dublin rack, sir ;
We 'll drown the King in eau-de-vie,
The Laureate in his sack, sir.
Old Eldon and his sordid hag
In molten gold we 'll smother,
And stifle in his own green bag
The Doctor and his brother.

In chains we 'll hang in fair Guildhall
The city's famed Recorder,
And next on proud Saint Stephen's fall,
Though Wynne should squeak to order.
In vain our tyrants then shall try
To 'scape our martial law, sir ;

In vain the trembling Speaker cry
That "strangers must withdraw," sir.

Copley to hang offends no text;
A rat is not a man, sir;
With schedules and with tax bills next
We 'll bury pious Van, sir.
The slaves who loved the income-tax
We 'll crush by scores, like mites, sir,
And him, the wretch who freed the blacks
And more enslaved the whites, sir.

The peer shall dangle from his gate,
The bishop from his steeple,
Till all, recanting, own the State
Means nothing but the People.
We 'll fix the Church's revenues
On apostolic basis;
One coat, one scrip, one pair of shoes,
Shall pay their strange grimaces.

We 'll strap the bar's deluding train
In their own darling halter,
And with his big church Bible brain
The parson at the altar.
Hail glorious hour when fair reform
Shall bless our longing nation,
And Hunt receive commands to form
A new administration!

Carlisle shall sit enthroned where sat
Our Cranmer and our Secker;

And Watson show his snow-white hat
  In England's rich Exchequer.
The breast of Thistlewood shall wear
  Our Wellesley's star and sash, man ;
And many a mausoleum fair
  Shall rise to honest Cashman.

Then, then beneath the nine-tailed cat
  Shall they who used it writhe, sir ;
And curates lean, and rectors fat,
  Shall dig the ground they tithe, sir.
Down with your Bayleys and your Bests,
  Your Giffords and your Gurneys !
We 'll clear the island of the pests
  Which mortals name attorneys.
Down with your sheriffs and your mayors,
  Your registrars and proctors !
We 'll live without the lawyer's cares,
  And die without the doctor's.
No discontented fair shall pout
  To see her spouse so stupid ;
We 'll tread the torch of Hymen out,
  And live content with Cupid.

Then, when the high-born and the great
  Are humbled to our level,
On all the wealth of Church and State,
  Like aldermen, we 'll revel.
We 'll live when hushed the battle's din,
  In smoking and in cards, sir,
In drinking unexcisèd gin,
  And wooing fair *poissardes*, sir.

IVRY (1824)

A SONG OF THE HUGUENOTS

NOW glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are !
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre !
Now let there be a merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy cornfields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France !
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters !
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold and stiff and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah ! hurrah ! a single field hath turned the chance of war !
Hurrah ! hurrah ! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre !

Oh ! how our hearts were beating when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array ;

With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzell's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears !
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land ;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand :
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood ;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for his own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The King is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye ;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, " God save our Lord the King."
" An if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah ! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled
din
Of fife and steed, and trump and drum, and roaring
culverin.
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint André's
plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and
Almayne.
Now, by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,
Charge for the golden lilies! upon them with the
lance!
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears
in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-
white crest ;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a
guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of
Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours ! Mayenne hath
turned his rein.
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish count
is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a
Biscay gale ;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags and
cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our
van,
" Remember Saint Bartholomew " was passed from
man to man.

But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down, with every foreigner! but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good Lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high! unfurl it wide! that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which brought his Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a foot-cloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.

Ho ! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms
be bright ;
Ho ! burghers of Saint Genevieve, keep watch and
ward to-night.
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath
raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise and the valor of
the brave.
Then glory to His holy name from whom all glories
are ;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of
Navarre.

THE BATTLE OF MONCONTOUR (1823)

OH, weep for Moncontour! Oh, weep for the hour
When the children of darkness and evil had power,
When the horsemen of Valois triumphantly trod
On the bosoms that bled for their rights and their God!

Oh, weep for Moncontour! Oh, weep for the slain,
Who for faith and for freedom lay slaughtered in vain!
Oh, weep for the living, who linger to bear
The renegade's shame or the exile's despair!

One look, one last look, to our cots and our towers,
To the rows of our vines and the beds of our flowers,
To the church where the bones of our fathers decayed,
Where we fondly had deemed that our own would be laid.

Alas! we must leave thee, dear desolate home,
To the spearmen of Uri, the shavelings of Rome,
To the serpent of Florence, the vulture of Spain,
To the pride of Anjou and the guile of Lorraine.

Farewell to thy fountains, farewell to thy shades,
To the song of thy youths and the dance of thy maids,
To the breath of thy gardens, the hum of thy bees,
And the long waving line of the blue Pyrenees.

Farewell, and forever. The priest and the slave
May rule in the halls of the free and the brave.
Our hearths we abandon ; our lands we resign ;
But, Father, we kneel to no altar but thine.

SONGS OF THE CIVIL WAR

I. THE BATTLE OF NASEBY, BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERGEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT. (1824)

OH, wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands and your feet and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sat in the high-places and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine;

And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced
hair,
And Astley and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the
Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his
sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into
a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark ! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line !
For God! for the Cause! for the Church, for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the
Rhine !

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his
drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall ;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes,
close your ranks ;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We
are gone !
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the
blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might ! O Lord, defend the
right !
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to
the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound ; the centre hath given ground :
Hark! hark! what means the trampling of horsemen on our rear ?
Whose banners do I see, boys ? 'T is he, thank God, 't is he, boys.
Bear up another minute : brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dikes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar ;
And he—he turns, he flies : shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho ! comrades, scour the plain ; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure ;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools ! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day ;

And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, forever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope!
There is woe in Oxford halls; there is wail in Durham's stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his cope.

And she of the Seven Hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

Here warlike cobblers railed from tops of casks
At lords and love-locks, monarchy and masques.

There many a graceless page, blaspheming, reeled,
From his dear cards and bumpers, to the field;
The famished rooks, impatient of delay,
Gnaw their cogged dice and curse the lingering prey;
His sad Andromache, with fruitless care,
Paints her wan lips and braids her borrowed hair.
For Church and King he quits his favorite arts,
Forsakes his Knaves, forsakes his Queen of Hearts;
For Church and King he burns to stain with gore
His doublet, stained with naught but sack before.

From a MS. Poem.

II. THE CAVALIER'S MARCH TO LONDON (1824)

To horse! to horse! brave Cavaliers!
To horse for Church and Crown!
Strike, strike your tents! snatch up your spears!
And ho for London town!
The imperial harlot, doomed a prey
To our avenging fires,
Sends up the voice of her dismay
From all her hundred spires.

The Strand resounds with maidens' shrieks,
The 'Change with merchants' sighs,
And blushes stand on brazen cheeks,
And tears in iron eyes;
And, pale with fasting and with fright,
Each Puritan committee
Hath summoned forth to prayer and fight
The Roundheads of the city.

And soon shall London's sentries hear
The thunder of our drum,
And London's dames, in wilder fear,
Shall cry, Alack! they come!

Fling the fascines ; tear up the spikes ;
And forward, one and all !
Down, down with all their train-band pikes,
Down with their mud-built wall!

Quarter ? Foul fall your whining noise,
Ye recreant spawn of fraud !
No quarter! Think on Strafford, boys.
No quarter ! Think on Laud.
What ho ! The craven slaves retire.
On! Trample them to mud!
No quarter ! Charge. No quarter! Fire.
No quarter ! Blood ! Blood ! Blood !

Where next ? In sooth there lacks no witch,
Brave lads, to tell us where ;
Sure London's sons be passing rich,
Her daughters wondrous fair:
And let that dastard be the theme
Of many a board's derision
Who quails for sermon, cuff, or scream
Of any sweet Precisian.

Their lean divines, of solemn brow,
Sworn foes to throne and steeple,
From an unwonted pulpit now
Shall edify the people ;
Till the tired hangman, in despair,
Shall curse his blunted shears,
And vainly pinch and scrape and tear
Around their leathern ears.

We 'll hang, above his own Guildhall,
The city's grave Recorder ;

And on the den of thieves we 'll fall,
Though Pym should speak to order.
In vain the lank-haired gang shall try
To cheat our martial law ;
In vain shall Lenthall trembling cry
That strangers must withdraw.

Of bench and woolsack, tub and chair,
We 'll build a glorious pyre,
And tons of rebel parchment there
Shall crackle in the fire.
With them shall perish, cheek by jowl,
Petition, psalm, and libel,
The Colonel's canting muster-roll,
The Chaplain's dog-eared Bible.

We 'll tread a measure round the blaze
Where England's pest expires,
And lead along the dance's maze
The beauties of the friars ;
Then smiles on every face shall shine
And joy in every soul.
Bring forth, bring forth the oldest wine,
And crown the largest bowl.

And as with nod and laugh ye sip
The goblet's rich carnation,
Whose bursting bubbles seem to tip
The wink of invitation,
Drink to those names—those glorious names—
Those names no time shall sever ;
Drink, in a draught as deep as Thames,
Our Church and King forever !

SERMON IN A CHURCH-YARD (1825)

LET pious Damon take his seat
With mincing step and languid smile,
And scatter from his 'kerchief sweet
Sabæan odors o'er the aisle ;
And spread his little jewelled hand,
And smile round all the parish beauties,
And pat his curls and smooth his band—
Meet prelude to his saintly duties.

Let the thronged audience press and stare ;
Let stifled maidens ply the fan,
Admire his doctrines and his hair,
And whisper, " What a good young man ! "
While he explains what seems most clear,
So clearly that it seems perplexed,
I 'll stay, and read my sermon here ;
And skulls and bones shall be the text.

Art thou the jilted dupe of fame ?
Dost thou with jealous anger pine
Whene'er she sounds some other name
With fonder emphasis than thine ?

To thee I preach : draw near ; attend !
Look on these bones, thou fool, and see
Where all her scorns and favors end,
What Byron is and thou must be.

Dost thou revere or praise or trust
Some clod like those that here we spurn ;
Something that sprang, like thee, from dust,
And shall, like thee, to dust return ?
Dost thou rate statesmen, heroes, wits,
At one sear leaf or wandering feather ?
Behold the black, damp, narrow pits,
Where they and thou must lie together.

Dost thou beneath the smile or frown
Of some vain woman bend thy knee ?
Here take thy stand, and trample down
Things that were once as fair as she.
Here rave of her ten thousand graces,
Bosom and lip, and eye and chin,
While, as in scorn, the fleshless faces
Of Hamiltons and Waldegraves grin.

Whate'er thy losses or thy gains,
Whate'er thy projects or thy fears,
Whate'er the joys, whate'er the pains,
That prompt thy baby smiles and tears,
Come to my school, and thou shalt learn,
In one short hour of placid thought,
A stoicism more deep, more stern,
Than ever Zeno's porch hath taught.

The plots and feats of those that press
To seize on titles, wealth, or power
Shall seem to thee a game of chess,
Devised to pass a tedious hour.
What matters it to him who fights
For shows of unsubstantial good
Whether his kings and queens and knights
Be things of flesh or things of wood ?

We check and take, exult and fret ;
Our plans extend, our passions rise,
Till in our ardor, we forget
How worthless is the victor's prize.
Soon fades the spell, soon comes the night ;
Say, will it not be then the same,
Whether we played with black or white,
Whether we lost or won the game ?

Dost thou among these hillocks stray,
O'er some dear idol's tomb to moan ?
Know that thy foot is on the clay
Of hearts once wretched as thy own.
How many a father's anxious schemes,
How many rapturous thoughts of lovers,
How many a mother's cherished dreams,
The swelling turf before thee covers !

Here, for the living and the dead,
The weepers and the friends they weep,
Hath been ordained the same cold bed,
The same dark night, the same long sleep.
Why shouldst thou writhe and sob and rave
O'er those with whom thou soon must be ?

Death his own sting shall cure ; the grave
  Shall vanquish its own victory.

Here learn that all the griefs and joys
  Which now torment, which now beguile,
Are children's hurts and children's toys,
  Scarce worthy of one bitter smile.
Here learn that pulpit, throne, and press,
  Sword, sceptre, lyre, alike are frail ;
That science is a blind man's guess,
  And history a nurse's tale.

Here learn that glory and disgrace,
  Wisdom and folly, pass away ;
That mirth hath its appointed space ;
  That sorrow is but for a day ;
That all we love and all we hate,
  That all we hope and all we fear,
Each mood of mind, each turn of fate,
  Must end in dust and silence here.

TRANSLATION FROM A. V. ARNAULT (1826)

Fables : Livre v. Fable 16

THOU poor leaf, so sear and frail,
Sport of every wanton gale,
Whence and whither dost thou fly
Through this bleak autumnal sky ?—
On a noble oak I grew,
Green and broad, and fair to view ;
But the monarch of the shade
By the tempest low was laid.
From that time, I wander o'er
Wood and valley, hill and moor,
Wheresoe'er the wind is blowing,
Nothing caring, nothing knowing ;
Thither go I whither goes
Glory's laurel, Beauty's rose.

[De ta tige détachée,
Pauvre feuille desséchée,
Où vas-tu ?—Je n'en sais rien.
L'orage a frappé le chêne
Qui seul était mon soutien.
De son inconstante haleine,

Le zéphyr ou l'aquilon
Depuis ce jour me promène
De la forêt à la plaine,
De la montagne au vallon.
Je vais où le vent me mène,
Sans me plaindre ou m'effrayer ;
Je vais où va toute chose,
Où va la feuille de rose
Et la feuille de laurier.]

DIES IRÆ (1826)

ON that great, that awful day,
This vain world shall pass away.
Thus the Sibyl sang of old,
Thus hath holy David told.
There shall be a deadly fear
When the Avenger shall appear,
And unveiled before his eye
All the works of man shall lie.
Hark to the great trumpet's tones
Pealing o'er the place of bones !
Hark ! it waketh from their bed
All the nations of the dead,
In a countless throng to meet
At the eternal judgment-seat.
Nature sickens with dismay,
Death may not retain his prey :
And before the Maker stand
All the creatures of his hand.
The great book shall be unfurled,
Whereby God shall judge the world ;
What was distant shall be near,
What was hidden shall be clear.
To what shelter shall I fly ?
To what guardian shall I cry ?

Oh, in that destroying hour,
Source of goodness, source of power,
Show thou, of thine own free grace,
Help unto a helpless race.
Though I plead not at thy throne
Aught that I for thee have done,
Do not thou unmindful be
Of what thou hast borne for me ;
Of the wandering, of the scorn,
Of the scourge, and of the thorn.
Jesus, hast *thou* borne the pain,
And hath all been borne in vain ?
Shall thy vengeance smite the head
For whose ransom thou hast bled ?
Thou, whose dying blessing gave
Glory to a guilty slave :
Thou, who from the crew unclean
Didst release the Magdalene :
Shall not mercy vast and free
Evermore be found in thee ?
Father, turn on me thine eyes,
See my blushes, hear my cries ;
Faint though be the cries I make,
Save me, for thy mercy's sake,
From the worm, and from the fire,
From the torments of thine ire.
Fold me with the sheep that stand
Pure and safe at thy right hand.
Hear thy guilty child implore thee,
Rolling in the dust before thee.
Oh, the horrors of that day,
When this frame of sinful clay,
Starting from its burial-place,

Must behold thee face to face !
Hear and pity, hear and aid,
Spare the creatures thou hast made.
Mercy, mercy, save, forgive !
Oh, who shall look on thee and live ?

THE MARRIAGE OF TIRZAH AND AHIRAD
(1827)

Genesis vi. 3.

IT is the dead of night :
  Yet more than noonday light
Beams far and wide from many a gorgeous hall.
  Unnumbered harps are tinkling,
  Unnumbered lamps are twinkling,
In the great city of the fourfold wall.
  By the brazen castle's moat,
  The sentry hums a livelier note ;
  The ship-boy chants a shriller lay
  From the galleys in the bay.
  Shout and laugh and hurrying feet
  Sound from mart and square and street,
  From the breezy laurel shades,
  From the granite colonnades,
  From the golden statue's base,
  From the stately market-place,
  Where, upreared by captive hands,
  The great Tower of Triumph stands,
  All its pillars in a blaze
  With the many-colored rays
  Which lanterns of ten thousand dyes
  Shed on ten thousand panoplies.

But closest is the throng,
And loudest is the song,
In that sweet garden by the river's side,
The abyss of myrtle bowers,
The wilderness of flowers,
Where Cain hath built the palace of his pride.
Such palace ne'er shall be again
Among the dwindling race of men.
From all its threescore gates the light
Of gold and steel afar was thrown ;
Two hundred cubits rose in height
The outer wall of polished stone.
On the top was ample space
For a gallant chariot-race.
Near either parapet a bed
Of the richest mould was spread,
Where amidst flowers of every scent and hue
Rich orange-trees, and palms, and giant cedars grew.

In the mansion's public court
All is revel, song, and sport ;
For there, till morn shall tint the east,
Menials and guards prolong the feast.
The boards with painted vessels shine ;
The marble cisterns foam with wine.
A hundred dancing-girls are there
With zoneless waists and streaming hair ;
And countless eyes with ardor gaze,
And countless hands the measure beat,
As mix and part in amorous maze
Those floating arms and bounding feet.
But none of all the race of Cain,

Save those whom he hath deigned to grace
With yellow robe and sapphire chain,
May pass beyond that outer space.
For now within the painted hall
The First-born keeps high festival.
Before the glittering valves all night
Their post the chosen captains hold,
Above the portal's stately height
The legend flames in lamps of gold :
" In life united and in death
May Tirzah and Ahirad be ;
The bravest he of all the sons of Seth,
Of all the house of Cain the loveliest she."

Through all the climates of the earth
This night is given to festal mirth ;
The long-continued war is ended,
The long-divided lines are blended.
Ahirad's bow shall now no more
Make fat the wolves with kindred gore.
The vultures shall expect in vain
Their banquet from the sword of Cain.
Without a guard the herds and flocks
Along the frontier moors and rocks
From eve to morn may roam ;
Nor shriek nor shout nor reddened sky
Shall warn the startled hind to fly
From his beloved home.
Nor to the pier shall burghers crowd
With straining necks and faces pale,
And think that in each flitting cloud
They see a hostile sail.
The peasant without fear shall guide

Down smooth canal or river wide
  His painted bark of cane,
Fraught, for some proud bazaar's arcades,
With chestnuts from his native shades,
  And wine and milk and grain.
Search round the peopled globe to-night,
  Explore each continent and isle,
There is no door without a light,
  No face without a smile.
The noblest chiefs of either race,
  From north and south, from west and east,
Crowd to the painted hall to grace
  The pomp of that atoning feast.
With widening eyes and laboring breath
Stand the fair-haired sons of Seth,
As bursts upon their dazzled sight
The endless avenue of light,
The bowers of tulip, rose, and palm,
The thousand cressets fed with balm,
The silken vests, the boards piled high
With amber, gold, and ivory,
The crystal founts whence sparkling flow
The richest wines o'er beds of snow,
The walls where blaze in living dyes
The king's three hundred victories.
The heralds point the fitting seat
To every guest in order meet,
And place the highest in degree
Nearest th' imperial canopy.
Beneath its broad and gorgeous fold,
With naked swords and shields of gold,
Stood the seven princes of the tribes of Nod.
  Upon an ermine carpet lay

Two tiger cubs in furious play,
Beneath the emerald throne where sat the signed of God.

Over that ample forehead white
The thousandth year returneth.
Still, on its commanding height,
With a fierce and blood-red light,
The fiery token burneth.
Wheresoe'er that mystic star
Blazeth in the van of war,
Back recoil before its ray
Shield and banner, bow and spear,
Maddened horses break away
From the trembling charioteer.
The fear of that stern king doth lie
On all that live beneath the sky ;
All shrink beneath the mark of his despair,
The seal of that great curse which he alone can bear.

Blazing in pearls and diamonds' sheen,
Tirzah, the young Ahirad's bride,
Of humankind the destined queen,
Sits by her great forefather's side.
The jetty curls, the forehead high,
The swanlike neck, the eagle face.
The glowing cheek, the rich dark eye,
Proclaim her of the elder race.
With flowing locks of auburn hue,
And features smooth and eye of blue,
Timid in love as brave in arms,
The gentle heir of Seth askance
Snatches a bashful, ardent glance
At her majestic charms ;

Blest when across that brow high musing flashes
A deeper tint of rose,
Thrice blest when from beneath the silken lashes
Of her proud eye she throws
The smile of blended fondness and disdain
Which marks the daughters of the House of Cain.

All hearts are light around the hall
Save his who is the lord of all.
The painted roofs, the attendant train,
The lights, the banquet, all are vain.
He sees them not. His fancy strays
To other scenes and other days.
A cot by a lone forest's edge
A fountain murmuring through the trees.
A garden with a wild-flower hedge,
Whence sounds the music of the bees,
A little flock of sheep at rest
Upon a mountain's swarthy breast.
On his rude spade he seems to lean
Beside the well-remembered stone,
Rejoicing o'er the promise green
Of the first harvest man hath sown.
He sees his mother's tears ;
His father's voice he hears,
Kind as when first it praised his youthful skill.
And soon a seraph-child,
In boyish rapture wild,
With a light crook comes bounding from the hill,
Kisses his hands, and strokes his face,
And nestles close in his embrace.
In his adamantine eye
None might discern his agony ;

But they who had grown hoary next his side,
And read his stern dark face with deepest skill,
Could trace strange meanings in that lip of pride,
Which for one moment quivered and was still.
No time for them to mark or him to feel
Those inward stings ; for clarion, flute, and lyre
And the rich voices of the countless quire,
Burst on the ear in one triumphant peal.
In breathless transport sits the admiring throng,
As sink and swell the notes of Jubal's lofty song.

" Sound the timbrel, strike the lyre,
Wake the trumpet's blast of fire
Till the gilded arches ring.
Empire, victory, and fame,
Be ascribed unto the name
Of our father and our king.
Of the deeds which he hath done,
Of the spoils which he hath won,
Let his grateful children sing.

" When the deadly fight was fought,
When the great revenge was wrought,
When on the slaughtered victims lay
The minion stiff and cold as they,
Doomed to exile sealed with flame,
From the west the wanderer came.
Six-score years and six he strayed
A hunter through the forest shade.
The lion's shaggy jaws he tore,
To earth he smote the foaming boar ;
He crushed the dragon's fiery crest,
And scaled the condor's dizzy nest,

Till hardy sons and daughters fair
Increased around his woodland lair.
Then his victorious bow, unstrung,
On the great bison's horn he hung.
Giraffe and elk he left to hold
  The wilderness of boughs in peace,
And trained his youth to pen the fold,
  To press the cream and weave the fleece.
As shrank the streamlet in its bed,
  As black and scant the herbage grew,
O'er endless plains his flocks he led
  Still to new brooks and pastures new.
So strayed he till the white pavilions,
Of his camp were told by millions,
Till his children's households seven
Were numerous as the stars of heaven.
Then he bade us rove no more ;
  And in the place that pleased him best,
On the great river's fertile shore,
  He fixed the city of his rest.
He taught us then to bind the sheaves,
  To strain the palm's delicious milk,
And from the dark-green mulberry leaves
  To cull the filmy silk.
Then first from straw-built mansions roamed
  O'er flower-beds trim the skilful bees ;
Then first the purple wine-vats foamed
  Around the laughing peasant's knees ;
And olive-yards, and orchards green,
O'er all the hills of Nod were seen.

" Of our father and our king
Let his grateful children sing.

From him our race its being draws,
His are our arts, and his our laws.
Like himself he bade us be,
Proud and brave, and fierce and free ;
True, through every turn of fate,
In our friendship and our hate.
Calm to watch, yet prompt to dare ;
Quick to feel, yet firm to bear ;
Only timid, only weak,
Before sweet woman's eye and cheek.
We will not serve, we will not know,
The God who is our father's foe.
In our proud cities to his name
No temples rise, no altars flame.
Our flocks of sheep, our groves of spice,
To him afford no sacrifice
Enough that once the House of Cain
Hath courted with oblation vain
The sullen power above.
Henceforth we bear the yoke no more ;
The only gods whom we adore
Are glory, vengeance, love.

" Of our father and our king
Let his grateful children sing.
What eye of living thing may brook
On his blazing brow to look ?
What might of living thing may stand
Against the strength of his right hand ?
First he led his armies forth
Against the Mammoths of the north,
What time they wasted in their pride
Pasture and vineyard far and wide.

Then the White River's icy flood
Was thawed with fire and dyed with blood,
And heard for many a league the sound
Of the pine forests blazing round,
And the death-howl and trampling din
Of the gigantic herd within.
From the surging sea of flame
Forth the tortured monsters came ;
As of breakers on the shore
Was their onset and their roar ;
As the cedar-trees of God
Stood the stately ranks of Nod.
One long night and one short day
The sword was lifted up to slay.
  Then marched the first-born and his sons
O'er the white ashes of the wood,
And counted of that savage brood
  Nine times nine thousand skeletons.

" On the snow with carnage red
The wood is piled, the skins are spread.
A thousand fires illume the sky ;
Round each a hundred warriors lie.
But, long ere half the night was spent,
Forth thundered from the golden tent
    The rousing voice of Cain.
A thousand trumps in answer rang,
And fast to arms the warriors sprang
    O'er all the frozen plain.
A herald from the wealthy bay
Hath come with tidings of dismay.
From the western ocean's coast
Seth hath led a countless host,

And vows to slay with fire and sword
All who call not on the Lord.
His archers hold the mountain forts ;
His light armed ships blockade the ports ;
  His horsemen tread the harvest down.
On twelve proud bridges he hath passed
The river dark with many a mast,
And pitched his mighty camp at last
  Before the imperial town.

" On the south and on the west,
Closely was the city prest.
Before us lay the hostile powers.
The breach was wide between the towers.
Pulse and meal within were sold
For a double weight of gold.
Our mighty father hath gone forth
Two hundred marches to the north.
Yet in that extreme of ill
We stoutly kept his city still ;
And swore beneath his royal wall,
Like his true sons, to fight and fall.

" Hark, hark, to gong and horn,
  Clarion and fife and drum ;
The morn, the fortieth morn,
  Fixed for the great assault, is come.
Between the camp and city spreads
A waving sea of helmèd heads.
From the royal car of Seth
Was hung the blood-red flag of death ;
At sight of that thrice-hallowed sign
  Wide flew at once each banner's fold ;

The captains clashed their arms of gold ;
The war-cry of Elohim rolled
Far down their endless line.
On the northern hills afar
Pealed an answering note of war.
Soon the dust, in whirlwinds driven,
Rushed across the northern heaven.
Beneath its shroud came thick and loud
The tramp as of a countless crowd ;
And at intervals were seen
Lance and hauberk's glancing sheen ;
And at intervals were heard
Charger's neigh and battle-word.

" Oh, what a rapturous cry
From all the city's thousand spires arose !
With what a look the hollow eye
Of the lean watchman glared upon the foes !
With what a yell of joy the mother prest
The moaning baby to her withered breast.
When, through the swarthy cloud that veiled the plain,
Burst on his children's sight the flaming brow of Cain! "

There paused perforce that noble song ;
For from all the joyous throng
Burst forth a rapturous shout which drowned
Singer's voice and trumpet's sound.
Thrice that stormy clamor fell,
Thrice rose again with mightier swell.
The last and loudest roar of all
Had died along the painted wall.
The crowd was hushed ; the minstrel train
Prepared to strike the chords again ;
When on each ear distinctly smote

A low and wild and wailing note.
It moans again. In mute amaze,
Menials and guests and harpers gaze.
They look above, beneath, around,
No shape doth own that mournful sound.
It comes not from the tuneful quire ;
It comes not from the feasting peers ;
There is no tone of earthly lyre
So soft, so sad, so full of tears.
Then a strange horror came on all
Who sat at that high festival.
The far-famed harp, the harp of gold,
Dropped from Jubal's trembling hold.
Frantic with dismay the bride
Clung to her Ahirad's side.
And the corpse-like hue of dread
Ahirad's haughty face o'erspread.
Yet not even in that agony of awe
Did the young leader of the fair-haired race
From Tirzah's shuddering grasp his hand withdraw
Or turn his eyes from Tirzah's livid face.
The tigers to their lord retreat,
And crouch and whine beneath his feet.
Prone sink to earth the golden shielded seven.
All hearts are cowed save his alone
Who sits upon the emerald throne ;
For he hath heard Elohim speak from heaven.
Still thunders in his ear the peal ;
Still blazes on his front the seal :
And on the soul of the proud king
No terror of created thing,
From sky or earth or hell hath power
Since that unutterable hour.

He rose to speak, but paused, and listening stood,
Not daunted, but in sad and curious mood,
With knitted brow and searching eye of fire.
A death-like stillness sank on all around,
And through the boundless space was heard no sound,
Save the soft tones of that mysterious lyre.
Broken, faint, and low,
At first the numbers flow.
Louder, deeper, quicker, still
Into one fierce peal they swell,
And the echoing palace fill
With a strange funereal yell.
A voice comes forth. But what or where?
On the earth or in the air?
Like the midnight winds that blow
Round a lone cottage in the snow,
With howling swell and sighing fall,
It wails along the trophied hall.
In such a wild and dreary moan
The watches of the Seraphim
Poured out all night their plaintive hymn
Before the eternal throne.
Then, when from many a heavenly eye
Drops as of earthly pity fell
For her who had aspired too high,
For him who loved too well.
When, stunned by grief, the gentle pair
From the nuptial garden fair,
Linked in a sorrowful caress,
Strayed through the untrodden wilderness;
And close behind their footsteps came
The desolating sword of flame,

And drooped the cedared alley's pride,
And fountains shrank and roses died.

" Rejoice, O Son of God, rejoice,"
Sang that melancholy voice,
" Rejoice, the maid is fair to see ;
The bower is decked for her and thee ;
The ivory lamps around it throw
A soft and pure and mellow glow.
Where'er the chastened lustre falls
On roof or cornice, floor or walls,
Woven of pink and rose appear
Such words as love delights to hear.
The breath of myrrh, the lute's soft sound,
Float through the moonlight galleries round.
O'er beds of violet and through groves of spice,
Lead thy proud bride into the nuptial bower ;
For thou hast bought her with a fearful price,
And she hath dowered thee with a fearful dower.
The price is life. The dower is death.
Accursèd loss ! Accursèd gain !
For her thou givest the blessedness of Seth,
And to thine arms she brings the curse of Cain.
Round the dark curtains of the fiery throne
Pauses awhile the voice of sacred song ;
From all the angelic ranks goes forth a groan,
' How long, O Lord, how long ? '
The still small voice makes answer, ' Wait and see,
O sons of glory, what the end shall be.'

" But, in the outer darkness of the place
Where God hath shown his power without his grace,
Is laughter and the sound of glad acclaim,

Loud as when, on wings of fire,
Fulfilled of his malign desire,
From Paradise the conquering serpent came.
The giant ruler of the morning-star
From off his fiery bed
Lifts high his stately head,
Which Michael's sword hath marked with many a scar.
At his voice the pit of hell
Answers with a joyous yell,
And flings her dusky portals wide
For the bridegroom and the bride.

"But louder still shall be the din
In the halls of Death and Sin
When the full measure runneth o'er,
When mercy can endure no more,
When he who vainly proffers grace
Comes in his fury to deface
The fair creation of his hand.
When from the heaven streams down amain
For forty days the sheeted rain;
And, from his ancient barriers free,
With a deafening roar, the sea
Comes foaming up the land.
Mother, cast thy babe aside;
Bridegroom, quit thy virgin bride;
Brother, pass thy brother by;
'T is for life, for life, ye fly.
Along the drear horizon raves
The swift-advancing line of waves.
On, on; their frothy crests appear
Each moment nearer and more near.
Urge the dromedary's speed;

Spur to death the reeling steed ;
If perchance ye yet may gain
The mountains that o'erhang the plain.

" O thou haughty land of Nod,
Hear the sentence of thy God.
Thou hast said, ' Of all the hills
Whence, after autumn rains, the rills
In silver trickle down,
The fairest is that mountain white
Which intercepts the morning light
From Cain's imperial town.
On its first and gentlest swell
Are pleasant halls where nobles dwell ;
And marble porticos are seen
Peeping through terraced gardens green.
Above are olives, palms, and vines ;
And higher yet the dark-blue pines ;
And highest on the summit shines
The crest of everlasting ice.
Here let the God of Abel own
That human art hath wonders shown
Beyond his boasted Paradise.'

" Therefore on that proud mountain's crown
Thy few surviving sons and daughters
Shall see their latest sun go down
Upon a boundless waste of waters.
None salutes and none replies ;
None heaves a groan or breathes a prayer ;
They crouch on earth with tearless eyes,
And clenchèd hands, and bristling hair.
The rain pours on ; no star illumes
The blackness of the roaring sky.

And each successive billow booms
  Nigher still, and still more nigh.
And now upon the howling blast
The wreaths of spray come thick and fast ;
And a great billow by the tempest curled
  Falls with a thundering crash ; and all is o'er.
And what is left of all this glorious world ?
  A sky without a beam, a sea without a shore.

" O thou fair land where from their starry home
Cherub and seraph oft delight to roam,
Thou city of the thousand towers,
  Thou palace of the golden stairs,
Ye gardens of perennial flowers,
  Ye moated gates, ye breezy squares ;
Ye parks amidst whose branches high
Oft peers the squirrel's sparkling eye ;
Ye vineyards in whose trellised shade
Pipes many a youth to many a maid ;
Ye ports where rides the gallant ship ;
  Ye marts where wealthy burghers meet ;
Ye dark-green lanes which know the trip
  Of woman's conscious feet ;
Ye grassy meads where, when the day is done,
  The shepherd pens his fold ;
Ye purple moors on which the setting sun
  Leaves a rich fringe of gold ;
Ye wintry deserts where the larches grow ;
Ye mountains on whose everlasting snow
No human foot hath trod ;
  Many a fathom shall ye sleep
  Beneath the gray and endless deep
In that great day of the revenge of God."

THE COUNTRY CLERGYMAN'S TRIP TO CAMBRIDGE (1827)

AN ELECTION BALLAD

AS I sat down to breakfast in state
At my living of Tithing-cum-Boring,
With Betty beside me to wait,
Came a rap that almost beat the door in.
I laid down my basin of tea,
And Betty ceased spreading the toast,
"As sure as a gun, sir," said she,
"That must be the knock of the post."

A letter—and free. Bring it here:
I have no correspondent who franks.
No! yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
'T is our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.
"Dear sir, as I know you desire
That the Church should receive due protection,
I humbly presume to require
Your aid at the Cambridge election.

"It has lately been brought to my knowledge
That the ministers fully design
To suppress each cathedral and college,
And eject every learned divine.

To assist this detestable scheme
Three nuncios from Rome are come over ;
They left Calais on Monday by steam,
And landed to dinner at Dover.

" An army of grim Cordeliers,
Well furnished with relics and vermin,
Will follow, Lord Westmoreland fears,
To effect what their chiefs may determine.
Lollard's Bower, good authorities say,
Is again fitting up for a prison ;
And a wood-merchant told me to-day,
'T is a wonder how fagots have risen.

" The finance scheme of Canning contains
A new Easter-offering tax ;
And he means to devote all the gains
To a bounty on thumb-screws and racks.
Your living, so neat and compact—
Pray, don't let the news give you pain !—
Is promised, I know for a fact,
To an olive-faced *padre* from Spain."

I read, and I felt my heart bleed,
Sore wounded with horror and pity ;
So I flew, with all possible speed,
To our Protestant champion's committee.
True gentlemen, kind and well-bred !
No fleering ! no distance ! no scorn !
They asked after my wife who is dead,
And my children who never were born.

They then, like high-principled Tories,
Called our sovereign unjust and unsteady,
And assailed him with scandalous stories,
Till the coach for the voters was ready.
That coach might be well called a casket
Of learning and brotherly love ;
There were parsons in boot and in basket ;
There were parsons below and above.

There were Sneaker and Griper, a pair
Who stick to Lord Mulesby like leeches ;
A snug chaplain of plausible air,
Who writes my Lord Goslingham's speeches.
Doctor Buzz, who alone is a host,
Who, with arguments weighty as lead,
Proves six times a week in the Post
That flesh somehow differs from bread.

Doctor Nimrod, whose orthodox toes
Are seldom withdrawn from the stirrup ;
Doctor Humdrum, whose eloquence flows
Like droppings of sweet poppy syrup ;
Doctor Rosygill puffing and fanning,
And wiping away perspiration ;
Doctor Humbug, who proved Mr. Canning
The beast in Saint John's Revelation.

A layman can scarce form a notion
Of our wonderful talk on the road ;
Of the learning, the wit, and devotion
Which almost each syllable showed :
Why divided allegiance agrees
So ill with our free constitution ;

How Catholics swear as they please,
In hope of the priest's absolution ;

How the Bishop of Norwich had bartered
His faith for a legate's commission ;
How Lyndhurst, afraid to be martyred,
Had stooped to a base coalition ;
How Papists are cased from compassion
By bigotry stronger than steel ;
How burning would soon come in fashion,
And how very bad it must feel.

We were all so much touched and excited
By a subject so direly sublime
That the rules of politeness were slighted,
And we all of us talked at a time ;
And in tones which each moment grew louder
Told how we should dress for the show,
And where we should fasten the powder,
And if we should bellow or no.

Thus from subject to subject we ran,
And the journey passed pleasantly o'er,
Till at last Doctor Humdrum began ;
From that time I remember no more.
At Ware he commenced his prelection,
In the dullest of clerical drones ;
And when next I regained recollection
We were rumbling o'er Trumpington stones.

SONG (1827)

OH stay, Madonna ! stay ;
'T is not the dawn of day
That marks the skies with yonder opal streak :
The stars in silence shine ;
Then press thy lips to mine,
And rest upon my neck thy fervid cheek.

Oh sleep, Madonna ! sleep ;
Leave me to watch and weep
O'er the sad memory of departed joys,
O'er hope's extinguished beam,
O'er fancy's vanished dream,
O'er all that nature gives and man destroys.

Oh wake, Madonna ! wake ;
Even now the purple lake
Is dappled o'er with amber flakes of light ;
A glow is on the hill ;
And every trickling rill
In golden threads leaps down from yonder height.

Oh fly, Madonna ! fly,
Lest day and envy spy

What only love and night may safely know :
Fly, and tread softly, dear !
Lest those who hate us hear
The sounds of thy light footsteps as they go.

THE DELIVERANCE OF VIENNA

TRANSLATED FROM VINCENZO DA FILICAJA

(Published in the *Winter's Wreath*, Liverpool, 1828)

"Le corde d' oro elette," etc.

THE chords, the sacred chords of gold,
Strike, O Muse, in measure bold ;
And frame a sparkling wreath of joyous songs
For that great God to whom revenge belongs.
Who shall resist his might
Who marshals for the fight
Earthquake and thunder, hurricane and flame ?
He smote the haughty race
Of unbelieving Thrace,
And turned their rage to fear, their pride to shame.
He looked in wrath from high,
Upon their vast array ;
And, in the twinkling of an eye,
Tambour and trump and battle-cry,
And steeds and turbaned infantry,
Passed like a dream away.
Such power defends the mansions of the just :

But, like a city without walls,
The grandeur of the mortal falls
Who glories in his strength and makes not God his trust.

The proud blasphemers thought all earth their own ;
They deemed that soon the whirlwind of their ire
Would sweep down tower and palace, dome and spire,
The Christian altars and the Augustan throne.
And soon, they cried, shall Austria bow
To the dust her lofty brow.
The princedoms of Almayne
Shall wear the Phrygian chain ;
In humbler waves shall vassal Tiber roll ;
And Rome, a slave forlorn,
Her laurelled tresses shorn,
Shall feel our iron in her inmost soul.
Who shall bid the torrent stay ?
Who shall bar the lightning's way ?
Who arrest the advancing van
Of the fiery Ottoman ?

As the curling smoke-wreaths fly
When fresh breezes clear the sky,
Passed away each swelling boast
Of the misbelieving host.
From the Hebrus rolling far
Came the murky cloud of war,
And in shower and tempest dread
Burst on Austria's fenceless head.
But not for vaunt or threat
Didst thou, O Lord, forget
The flock so dearly bought, and loved so well.

Even in the very hour
Of guilty pride and power
Full on the circumcised thy vengeance fell.
Then the fields were heaped with dead,
Then the streams with gore were red,
And every bird of prey, and every beast,
From wood and cavern thronged to thy great feast.

What terror seized the fiends obscene of Nile !
How wildly in his place of doom beneath,
Arabia's lying prophet gnashed his teeth,
And cursed his blighted hopes and wasted guile !
When, at the bidding of thy sovereign might,
Flew on their destined path
Thy messengers of wrath,
Riding on storms and wrapped in deepest night.
The Phthian mountains saw,
And quaked with mystic awe :
The proud Sultana of the Straits bowed down
Her jewelled neck and her embattled crown.
The miscreants, as they raised their eyes
Glaring defiance on thy skies,
Saw adverse winds and clouds display
The terrors of their black array ;
Saw each portentous star
Whose fiery aspect turned of yore to flight
The iron chariots of the Canaanite
Gird its bright harness for a deadlier war.

Beneath thy withering look
Their limbs with palsy shook ;
Scattered on earth the Crescent banners lay ;

Trembled with panic fear
Sabre and targe and spear,
Through the proud armies of the rising day.
Faint was each heart, unnerved each hand ;
And, if they strove to charge or stand,
Their efforts were as vain
As his who, scared in feverish sleep
By evil dreams, essays to leap,
Then backward falls again.
With a crash of wild dismay,
Their ten thousand ranks gave way ;
Fast they broke, and fast they fled ;
Trampled, mangled, dying, dead,
Horse and horseman mingled lay ;
Till the mountains of the slain
Raised the valleys to the plain.
Be all the glory to thy name divine !
The swords were ours ; the arm, O Lord, was thine.

Therefore to thee, beneath whose footstool wait
The powers which erring man calls Chance and Fate,
To thee who hast laid low
The pride of Europe's foe,
And taught Byzantium's sullen lords to fear,
I pour my spirit out
In a triumphant shout,
And call all ages and all lands to hear.
Thou who evermore endurest,
Loftiest, mightiest, wisest, purest,
Thou, whose will destroys or saves,
Dread of tyrants, hope of slaves,
The wreath of glory is from thee,
And the red sword of victory.

There where exulting Danube's flood
Runs stained with Islam's noblest blood
From that tremendous field,
There where in mosque the tyrants met,
And from the crier's minaret
Unholy summons pealed,
Pure shrines and temples now shall be
Decked for a worship worthy thee.
To thee thy whole creation pays
With mystic sympathy its praise,
The air, the earth, the seas :
The day shines forth with livelier beam ;
There is a smile upon the stream,
An anthem on the breeze.
Glory, they cry, to him whose might
Hath turned the barbarous foe to flight,
Whose arm protects with power divine
The city of his favored line.
The caves, the woods, the rocks, repeat the sound ;
The everlasting hills roll the long echoes round.

But if thy rescued Church may dare
Still to besiege thy throne with prayer,
Sheathe not, we implore thee, Lord,
Sheathe not thy victorious sword.
Still Pannonia pines away,
Vassal of a double sway ;
Still thy servants groan in chains,
Still the race which hates thee reigns.
Part the living from the dead ;
Join the members to the head :
Snatch thine own sheep from yon fell monster's hold ;
Let one kind shepherd rule one undivided fold.

He is the victor, only he
Who reaps the fruits of victory.
We conquered once in vain
When foamed the Ionian waves with gore,
And heaped Lepanto's stormy shore
With wrecks and Moslem slain.
Yet wretched Cyprus never broke
The Syrian tyrant's iron yoke.
Shall the twice-vanquished foe
Again repeat his blow?
Shall Europe's sword be hung to rust in peace?
No! let the red-cross ranks
Of the triumphant Franks
Bear swift deliverance to the shrines of Greece,
And in her inmost heart let Asia feel
The avenging plagues of Western fire and steel.

O God! for one short moment raise
The veil which hides those glorious days.
The flying foes I see thee urge
Even to the river's headlong verge.
Close on their rear the loud uproar
Of fierce pursuit from Ister's shore
Comes pealing on the wind;
The Raab's wild waters are before,
The Christian sword behind.
Sons of perdition, speed your flight.
No earthly spear is in the rest;
No earthly champion leads to fight
The warriors of the West.
The Lord of Hosts asserts his old renown,
Scatters, and smites, and slays, and tramples down.
Fast, fast, beyond what mortal tongue can say,

Or mortal fancy dream,
He rushes on his prey ;
Till, with the terrors of the wondrous theme
Bewildered and appalled, I cease to sing,
And close my dazzled eye, and rest my wearied wing.

THE ARMADA (1832)

A FRAGMENT

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise ;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay ;
Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace ;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.

Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall ;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall ;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;
Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums.
His yeomen round the market-cross make clear an ample space ;
For there behooves him to set up the standard of her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the laboring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up the ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume and Genoa's bow and Cæsar's eagle shield ;
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flag-staff deep, Sir Knight ; ho ! scatter flowers, fair maids ;
Ho ! gunners, fire a loud salute ; ho ! gallants, draw your blades !

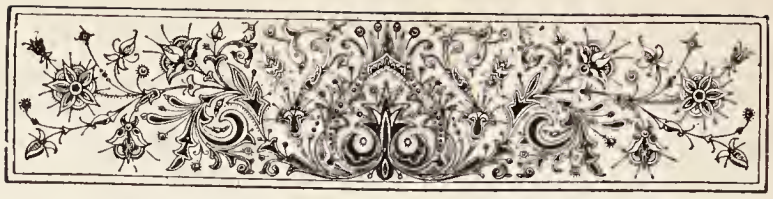
Thou sun, shine on her joyously ; ye breezes, waft her wide ;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride !

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold ;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold ;
Night sank upon the dusky beach and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day ;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on Saint Michael's Mount it shone ; it shone on Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves ;
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves ;
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew ;
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,

And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton Down ;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like
silence broke,
And, with one start and with one cry, the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering
fires ;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
spires ;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
louder cheer ;
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down
each roaring street ;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the
din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spur-
ring in :
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the war-
like errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires
of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
bright couriers forth ;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
for the north :

And on and on, without a pause, untired they bounded
still ;
All night from tower to tower they sprang, they sprang
from hill to hill ;
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
rocky dales ;
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of
Wales ;
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height ;
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
crest of light ;
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the bound-
less plain ;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of
Trent ;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's em-
battled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of
Carlisle.

. . . . . .



INSCRIPTION

ON THE

STATUE OF LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

AT CALCUTTA (1835)

TO

WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK,

Who, during seven years, ruled India with eminent
Prudence, integrity, and benevolence ;
Who, placed at the head of a great empire, never laid
aside
The simplicity and moderation of a private citizen ;
Who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of
British Freedom ;
Who never forgot that the end of government is
The happiness of the governed ;
Who abolished cruel rites ;
Who effaced humiliating distinctions ;
Who gave liberty to the expression of public opinion ;
Whose constant study it was to elevate the intellectual
And moral character of the nations committed to
his charge,
This Monument
Was erected by men

Who, differing in race, in manners, in language,
And in religion,
Cherish, with equal veneration and gratitude,
The memory of his wise, upright,
And paternal administration.

EPITAPH ON SIR BENJAMIN HEATH MALKIN. At Calcutta (1837)

This Monument
Is sacred to the memory
Of
Sir Benjamin Heath Malkin, Knight,
One of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature;
A man eminently distinguished
By his literary and scientific attainments,
By his professional learning and ability,
By the clearness and accuracy of his intellect,
By diligence, by patience, by firmness, by love of truth,
By public spirit, ardent and disinterested,
Yet always under the guidance of discretion,
By rigid uprightness, by unostentatious piety,
By the serenity of his temper,
And by the benevolence of his heart.

He was born on the 29th September, 1797.
He died on the 21st October, 1837.

THE LAST BUCCANEER (1839)

THE winds were yelling, the waves were swelling,
The sky was black and drear,
When the crew with eyes of flame brought the ship without a name
Alongside the last Buccaneer.

"Whence flies your sloop full sail before so full a gale,
When all others drive bare on the seas?
Say, come ye from the shore of the holy Salvador,
Or the gulf of the rich Caribees?"

"From a shore no search hath found, from a gulf no line can sound,
Without rudder or needle we steer;
Above, below, our bark dies the sea-fowl and the shark,
As we fly by the last Buccaneer.

"To-night there shall be heard on the rocks of Cape de Verde
A loud crash, and a louder roar;
And to-morrow shall the deep, with a heavy moaning, sweep
The corpses and wreck to the shore."

The stately ship of Clyde securely now may ride
In the breath of the citron shades ;
And Severn's towering mast securely now flies fast,
Through the sea of the balmy Trades.

From Saint Jago's wealthy port, from Havana's royal fort,
The seaman goes forth without fear ;
For since that stormy night not a mortal hath had sight
Of the flag of the last Buccaneer.

EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE (1845)

TO my true king I offered, free from stain,
Courage and faith ; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him I threw lands, honors, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Gray-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime ;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees ;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep ;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked—an early grave.
O thou whom chance leads to this nameless stone
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

EPITAPH ON LORD METCALFE (1847)

Near this stone is laid
CHARLES LORD METCALFE,
A statesman tried in many high offices
And difficult conjunctures,
And found equal to all.
The three greatest dependencies of the British crown
Were successively intrusted to his care.
In India, his fortitude, his wisdom,
His probity, and his moderation
Are held in honorable remembrance
By men of many races, languages, and religions.
In Jamaica, still convulsed by a social revolution,
His prudence calmed the evil passions
Which long suffering had engendered in one class
And long domination in another.
In Canada, not yet recovered from the calamities of civil war,
He reconciled contending factions
To each other, and to the mother country.
Costly monuments in Asiatic and American cities
Attest the gratitude of the nations which he ruled.
This tablet records the sorrow and the pride
With which his memory is cherished by his family.

TRANSLATION FROM PLAUTUS (1850)

[The author passed a part of the summer and autumn of 1850 at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight. He usually, when walking alone, had with him a book. On one occasion, as he was loitering in the landslip near Bouchurch, reading the Rudens of Plautus, it struck him that it might be an interesting experiment to attempt to produce something which might be supposed to resemble passages in the lost Greek drama of Diphilus, from which the Rudens appears to have been taken. He selected one passage in the Rudens, of which he then made the following version, which he afterwards copied out at the request of a friend to whom he had repeated it.

Act IV. Sc. VII.

DÆMONES. O Gripe, Gripe, in ætate hominum plurimæ
Fiunt transennæ, ubi decipiuntur dolis ;
Atque edepol in eas plerumque esca imponitur.
Quam si quis avidus pascit escam avariter,
Decipitur in transenna avaritia sua.
Ille, qui consulte, docte, atque astute cavet,
Diutine uti bene licet partum bene.
Mi istæc videtur præda prædatum irier :
Ut cum majore dote abeat, quam advenerit.
Egone ut, quod ad me adlatum esse alienum sciam,

Calem ? Minime istuc faciet noster Dæmones.
Semper cavere hoc sapientes æquissimum est,
Ne conscii sint ipsi maleficiis suis.
Ego, mihi quum lusi, nil moror ullum lucrum.
GRIPUS. Spectavi ego pridem Comicos ad istum modum
Sapienter dicta dicere, atque iis plaudier,
Quum illos sapientis mores monstrabant poplo ;
Sed quum inde suam quisque ibant diversi domum,
Nullus erat illo pacto, ut illi jusserant.]

ΔΑΙΜ. *Ὦ Γρῖπε, Γρῖπε, πλεῖστα παγίδων σχήματα*
ἴδοι τις ἂν πεπηγμέν' ἐν ϑνητῶν βίῳ,
καὶ πλεῖστ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δελέαθ', ὧν ἐπιθυμίᾳ
ὀρεγόμενός τις ἐν κακοῖς ἁλίσκεται ·
ὅστις δ' ἀπιστεῖ καὶ σοφῶς φυλάττεται,
καλῶς ἀπολαύει τῶν καλῶς πεπορισμένων.
ἅρπαγμα δ' οὐχ ἅρπαγμ' ὁ λάρναξ οὑτοσί,
ἀλλ' αὐτός, οἶμαι, μᾶλλον ἁρπάξει τινά.
τόνδ' ἄνδρα κλέπτειν τἀλλότρι'—εὐφήμει, τάλαν ·
ταυτήν γε μὴ μαίνοιτο μανίαν Δαιμονῆς,
τόδε γὰρ ἀεὶ σοφοῖσιν εὐλαβητέον,
μή τί ποθ' ἑαυτῷ τις ἀδίκημα συννοῇ ·
κέρδη δ' ἔμοιγε πάνθ' ὅδοις εὐφραίνομαι,
κέρδος δ' ἀκερδὲς ὃ τοὐμὸν ἀλγύνει κέαρ.
ΓΡΙΠ. *κἀγὼ μὲν ἤδη κωμικῶν ἀκήκοα*
σεμνῶς λεγόντων τοιάδε, τοὺς δὲ ϑεωμένους
κροτεῖν, ματαίοις ἡδομένους σοφίσμασιν ·
εἶϑ', ὡς ἀπῆλθ' ἕκαστος οἴκαδ', οὐδενὶ
οὐδὲν παρέμεινε τῶν καλῶς εἰρημένων.

VALENTINE

TO THE HON. MARY C. STANHOPE

DAUGHTER OF LORD AND LADY MAHON [1]

(1851)

HAIL, day of music, day of love,
On earth below, in air above.
In air the turtle fondly moans,
The linnet pipes in joyous tones ;
On earth the postman toils along,
Bent double by huge bales of song,
Where, rich with many a gorgeous dye,
Blazes all Cupid's heraldry—
Myrtles and roses, doves and sparrows,
Love-knots and altars, lamps and arrows.
What nymph without wild hopes and fears
The double rap this morning hears ?
Unnumbered lasses, young and fair,
From Bethnal Green to Belgrave Square,
With cheeks high flushed, and hearts loud beating,
Await the tender annual greeting.
The loveliest lass of all is mine—
Good-morrow to my Valentine !

[1] Already published by Earl Stanhope in his *Miscellanies*, 1863.

Good-morrow, gentle child ! and then
Again good-morrow, and again,
Good-morrow following still good-morrow,
Without one cloud of strife or sorrow.
And when the god to whom we pay
In jest our homages to-day
Shall come to claim, no more in jest,
His rightful empire o'er thy breast,
Benignant may his aspect be,
His yoke the truest liberty :
And if a tear his power confess,
Be it a tear of happiness.
It shall be so. The Muse displays
The future to her votary's gaze ;
Prophetic rage my bosom swells—
I taste the cake, I hear the bells !
From Conduit Street the close array
Of chariots barricades the way
To where I see, with outstretched hand,
Majestic, thy great kinsman stand,[1]
And half unbend his brow of pride,
As welcoming so fair a bride.
Gay favors, thick as flakes of snow,
Brighten Saint George's portico.
Within I see the chancel's pale,
The orange flowers, the Brussels veil,
The page on which those fingers white,
Still trembling from the awful rite,
For the last time shall faintly trace
The name of Stanhope's noble race.
I see kind faces round thee pressing,
I hear kind voices whisper blessing ;

[1] The statue of Mr. Pitt in Hanover Square.

And with those voices mingles mine—
All good attend my Valentine !

T. B. MACAULAY.

St. Valentine's Day, 1851.

PARAPHRASE OF A PASSAGE IN THE CHRONICLE OF THE MONK OF ST. GALL
(1856)

[In the summer of 1856, the author travelled with a friend through Lombardy. As they were on the road between Novara and Milan, they were conversing on the subject of the legends relating to that country. The author remarked to his companion that Mr. Panizzi, in the Essay on the Romantic Narrative Poetry of the Italians, prefixed to his edition of Boiardo, had pointed out an instance of the conversion of ballad-poetry into prose narrative which strongly confirmed the theory of Perizonius and Niebuhr, upon which the Lays of Ancient Rome are founded; and, after repeating an extract which Mr. Panizzi has given from the Chronicle of the Monk of St. Gall, he proceeded to frame a metrical paraphrase. The note in Mr. Panizzi's work (vol. i., p. 123, note *b*) is here copied verbatim.

"The monk says that Oger was with Desiderius, King of Lombardy, watching the advance of Charlemagne's army. The king often asked Oger where was Charlemagne. Quando videris, inquit, segetem campis inhorrescere, ferreum Padum et Ticinum marinis fluctibus ferro nigrantibus muros civitatis inundantes, tunc est spes Caroli venientis. His nedum expletis primum ad occasum Circino vel Borea cœpit apparere, quasi nubes tenebrosa, quæ diem clarissimam horrentes convertit in umbras. Sed propiante Imperatore, ex armo-

rum splendore, dies omni nocte tenebrosior oborta est inclusis. Tunc visus est ipse ferreus Carolus ferrea galea cristatus, ferreis manicis armillatus, etc., etc. His igitur, quæ ego balbus et edentulus, non ut debui circuitu tardiore diutius explicare tentavi, veridicus speculator Oggerus celerrimo visu contuitus dixit ad Desiderium : Ecce, habes quem tantopere perquisisti. Et hæc dicens, pene exanimis cecidit.—MONACH. SANGAL., *De Reb. Bel. Caroli Magni*, lib. ii., § xxvi. Is this not evidently taken from poetical effusions ? '']

PARAPHRASE

TO Oggier spake King Didier :
" When cometh Charlemagne ?
We looked for him in harvest ;
We looked for him in rain.
Crops are reaped, and floods are past,
And still he is not here.
Some token show, that we may know
That Charlemagne is near."

Then to the King made answer
Oggier, the christened Dane :
" When stands the iron harvest
Ripe on the Lombard plain,
That stiff harvest which is reaped
With sword of knight and peer,
Then by that sign ye may divine
That Charlemagne is near.

" When round the Lombard cities
The iron flood shall flow,
A swifter flood than Ticin,
A broader flood than Po,
Frothing white with many a plume,
Dark blue with many a spear,
Then by that sign ye may divine
That Charlemagne is near."

LINES WRITTEN ON THE NIGHT OF THE 30TH OF JULY, 1847

AT THE CLOSE OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL CONTEST FOR EDINBURGH

THE day of tumult, strife, defeat, was o'er ;
Worn out with toil and noise and scorn and spleen,
I slumbered, and in slumber saw once more
A room in an old mansion,[1] long unseen.

That room, methought, was curtained from the light ;
Yet through the curtains shone the moon's cold ray
Full on a cradle, where, in linen white,
Sleeping life's first soft sleep, an infant lay.

Pale flickered on the hearth the dying flame,
And all was silent in that ancient hall,
Save when by fits on the low night-wind came
The murmur of the distant waterfall.

And lo ! the fairy queens who rule our birth
Drew nigh to speak the new-born baby's doom :

[1] Rothley Temple, Leicestershire.

With noiseless step, which left no trace on earth,
From gloom they came, and vanished into gloom.

Not deigning on the boy a glance to cast,
Swept careless by the gorgeous Queen of Gain ;
More scornful still the Queen of Fashion passed,
With mincing gait and sneer of cold disdain.

The Queen of Power tossed high her jewelled head,
And o'er her shoulder threw a wrathful frown ;
The Queen of Pleasure on the pillow shed
Scarce one stray rose-leaf from her fragrant crown.

Still Fay in long procession followed Fay,
And still the little couch remained unblest ;
But, when those wayward sprites had passed away,
Came One, the last, the mightiest, and the best.

O glorious lady with the eyes of light,
And laurels clustering round thy lofty brow,
Who by the cradle's side didst watch that night,
Warbling a sweet strange music, who wast thou ?

" Yes, darling, let them go; " so ran the strain :
" Yes, let them go—gain, fashion, pleasure, power,
And all the busy elves to whose domain
Belongs the nether sphere, the fleeting hour.

" Without one envious sigh, one anxious scheme,
The nether sphere, the fleeting hour resign ;
Mine is the world of thought, the world of dream,
Mine all the past, and all the future mine.

" Fortune, that lays in sport the mighty low ;
Age, that to penance turns the joys of youth,
Shall leave untouched the gifts which I bestow—
The sense of beauty and the thirst of truth.

" Of the fair brotherhood who share my grace,
I, from thy natal day, pronounce thee free ;
And if for some I keep a nobler place,
I keep for none a happier than for thee.

" There are who, while to vulgar eyes they seem
Of all my bounties largely to partake,
Of me as of some rival's handmaid deem,
And court me but for gain's, power's, fashion's sake.

" To such, though deep their lore, though wide their fame,
Shall my great mysteries be all unknown ;
But thou, through good and evil, praise and blame,
Wilt thou not love me for myself alone ?

" Yes, thou wilt love me with exceeding love,
And I will tenfold all that love repay ;
Still smiling, though the tender may reprove ;
Still faithful, though the trusted may betray.

" For aye mine emblem was, and aye shall be,
The ever-during plant whose bough I wear,
Brightest and greenest then when every tree
That blossoms in the light of Time is bare.

" In the dark hour of shame, I deigned to stand
Before the frowning peers at Bacon's side ;

On a far shore I smoothed with tender hand,
Through months of pain, the sleepless bed of Hyde :

" I brought the wise and brave of ancient days
To cheer the cell where Raleigh pined alone ;
I lighted Milton's darkness with the blaze
Of the bright ranks that guard the eternal throne.

" And even so, my child, it is my pleasure
That thou not then alone shouldst feel me nigh
When in domestic bliss and studious leisure
Thy weeks uncounted come, uncounted fly ;

" Not then alone when myriads, closely prest
Around thy car, the shout of triumph raise ;
Nor when, in gilded drawing-rooms, thy breast
Swells at the sweeter sound of woman's praise.

" No ; when on restless night dawns cheerless morrow,
When weary soul and wasting body pine,
Thine am I still, in danger, sickness, sorrow,
In conflict, obloquy, want, exile, thine ;

" Thine, where on mountain waves the snow-birds scream,
Where more than Thule's winter barbs the breeze,
Where scarce, through lowering clouds, one sickly gleam
Lights the drear May-day of Antarctic seas ;

" Thine, when around thy litter's track all day
White sand-hills shall reflect the blinding glare ;
Thine, when, through forests breathing death, thy way
All night shall wind by many a tiger's lair ;

"Thine most, when friends turn pale, when traitors fly,
When, hard beset, thy spirit, justly proud,
For truth, peace, freedom, mercy, dares defy
A sullen priesthood and a raving crowd.

"Amidst the din of all things fell and vile,
Hate's yell, and envy's hiss, and folly's bray,
Remember me; and with an unforced smile
See riches, baubles, flatterers, pass away.

"Yes, they will pass away; nor deem it strange:
They come and go, as comes and goes the sea.
And let them come and go: thou, through all change,
Fix thy firm gaze on virtue and on me."

END OF VOLUME VIII

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